EDMUND OLIVER.

BY

CHARLES LLOYD.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

In loving thou doſt well, in paſſion not,
Wherein true love conſiſts not; love refines
The thoughts, and heart enlarges, hath his ſeat
In reaſon, and is judicious, is the ſcale
By which to heavenly love thou may'ſt aſcend.

MILTON.

VOL. II.

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EDMUND OLIVER.

LETTER XXXIX.

CHARLES MAURICE

TO

MRS. MAURICE.

London.

MY DEAR REBECCA,

IF it be not he, there was an unnatural—a frightful likeneſs.—I was ſtanding at a gentleman's drawing-room window, in the Hackney-road, when a company of light horſe drew my attention. As they were paſſing by, I fancied Edmund's countenance was before me—his large gliſtening eye—his dark eyebrows—there was the ſame bend in the

ſhoulder—and preciſely his attitude and expreſſion of countenance—except that his perſon had more of downcaſt melancholy—and the dark hair of my friend was not to be traced through the powder and pomatum of the man who excited my curioſity—I ran down ſtairs on ſeeing them—intending to call after him—but immediately beyond the houſe in which I was—there was a turning towards the city where ſeveral roads meet;—here the company diſperſed, and it was impoſſible to diſcover the ſtranger amid the confuſion of ſuch a multitude.

I ſhall go and watch on the road where my friend's houſe ſtands, again to-morow evening.—This letter ſhall not be cloſed till I can acquaint you with the reſult.

We

We have embraced! Oliver is riſen from the dead!—This joy is beyond endurance!

I was ſtanding a few paces from the houſe which I ſaw the company paſs the evening before—at the return of the ſame hour it drew near,—when about half of the men had gone by, I diſcovered the countenance which had ſo much awakened my attention the night before—the ſoldier was then looking towards the oppoſite ſide of the road—in an inſtant he turned his head, and catching my eye—ſhrieked out—"Charles, Charles!"

He rather threw himſelf off, than diſmounted his horſe; and ere I had moved from the place where I was ſtanding, he flung his arms round my neck.

We were too much agitated to ſpeak—In a few ſeconds the "halloos" of his comrades rouſed him—his horſe had eſcaped,—it was preſently brought to him by a man who was paſſing on the road.—As the company were on the point of ſeparating, he did not mount again—he thruſt his arm within mine, and taking the bridle of his horſe in the other hand, we paced on in ſilence, ſometimes catching a tranſient glance of each other's countenance, till he ſtopped at a ſmall inn in Shoreditch.

"This has been my abode for the laſt three weeks," he cried, as he entered the yard.—"Well, my young jockey, and how be you to night?" exclaimed a dirty looking fellow as we paſſed—"So, you are dangling arm in arm with your friend—look to your horſe, for he is

mortally

mortally wet—he muſt have a good dreſſing to night, take my word for it, young maſter."

After he had led his horſe to the ſtable, and had unbridled him, and faſtened the halter round his neck, he went up to a good-natured looking boy, who was at the other end of the ſtable, and putting ſix-pence into his hand, aſked him to take care of his horſe for the evening—the lad readily complied, and we quitted the ſtable.—As we croſſed the yard again, the fellow, who had before accoſted us, ſhrugged up his ſhoulders, and with a malignant ſneer cried, "So, ſo, Ned, you are off are you—a pretty dog you to enter his Majeſty's ſervice."

We paſſed on without noticing him, nor ſtopped or ſpoke to each other (the evening was now ſetting in) till we arrived at Roger Oliver's apartments.

The ſervant, who opened the door, did not know him—I took the candle from her, and we ſhut ourſelves in the room upſtairs.—Edmund again threw his arms round my neck—his heart beat with convulſed throbbings againſt my boſom—his only expreſſions were now and then—— "Charles, Charles," faintly breathed out.

He looked ſo pale and wild, that I was fearful the ſcene would become too much for him.—I made him ſwallow a few glaſſes of wine—this rouſed his frozen and torpid feelings—and preſently his eyes became ſuffuſed—the tears ran copiouſly

copiouſly down his cheeks, and the fearful impetuoſity of his manner ſubſided.

His brother ſhortly after entered the room.—Edmund ſprung up to meet him, and ſhook him eagerly by the hand.—Roger was at firſt confounded—he did not recognize Oliver in his ſoldier's dreſs—but when he ſpoke, the diſcovery flaſhed on his mind, and he expreſſed more intereſt at the reſtoration of his brother than I had imagined him capable of.

We ſaid little during the evening—Edmund's feelings were too ſore for trivial converſation—and in the preſence of his brother I knew ſo well that it would be diſagreeable to him to open his heart, that nothing paſſed on our ſide from delicacy, and on his from reſtraint on the ſubject of his diſappearance.

At ten o'clock he withdrew. He promiſed to be with me this morning, and to bring a packet containing the imperfect narrative of what had befallen him:—he embraced me eagerly, and moſt affectionately at parting.

I aroſe early this morning to ſend you the good news.—After our next interview you ſhall hear from me again.

God bleſs my Rebecca,

CHARLES MAURICE.

LETTER

LETTER XL.

CHARLES MAURICE
TO
Mrs. MAURICE.

Wednesday.

DEAR REBECCA,

AT nine o'clock this morning, Edmund came again—his manner was more compoſed than during the interview of yeſterday.—He had not been in the room many minutes before he put a packet into my hands:—"This," ſaid he, "contains the hiſtory of the few firſt days which I ſpent in Shoreditch; a narrative of the former month, which I had drawn up, I have had the misfortune to loſe—I miſſed it after my mind had been undergoing ſuch a fermentation,

that I knew not where to trace it—however, I will relate to you my adventures to the period at which that begins, and from the time it concludes," pointing to the papers which I had placed on a table before us.

I ſtopped him by telling the hiſtory of my rencounter in the Borough, at the ſame time aſking him whether the packet which I had found was not the one alluded to.

He was aſtoniſhed; however a few ſentences mutually ſatisfied us—and Edmund alleging that ſome duties of his new ſtation called him away for an hour or two—I began the peruſal of the following Narration.

SHORE-

SHOREDITCH.

Wednesday.

"A ſergeant came the day before yeſterday into the pot-houſe in the Borough, as I was ſitting by the kitchen fire—the landlady had juſt been preſenting her bill—I had no money left—my ſenſes were inflamed even to the delirium of fever, partly from liquor, and partly from my ſituation, when he entered—I was wholly abſorbed in my own ſufferings—and ſat unconſcious of the perſons and things around me.

"Suddenly a violent clap on the back, with a "cheer-up my boy," loudly vociferated, rouſed me from my lethargic wretchedneſs.—I looked in the face of my new acquaintance, and perceived that I had been accoſted in this very familiar

miliar ſtyle by a good natured looking fellow, in the dreſs of a ſergeant.

"He aſked me to drink with him—I would have gone to the devil with as little ceremony, and I complied.

"Tankard after tankard of their beſt ale was called for—the reckoning was to be paid—I looked ſilly—confuſed—at laſt I muttered—"By God, this ſhan't be—landlady put this to my ſcore."

"Damn my ſoul if ſhe ſhall," ſaid the fellow, and threw down the whole ſum on the table.—I could not bear this—I ſtarted from my ſeat, and looking ſteadily in his face, demanded what was the bounty money given in the company to which he belonged.

"Fifteen

—" Fifteen pounds," he cried, " and " by the Lord you would do to a hair's " breadth; we loſt a fine young fellow " this morning, who died of a fever— " come along,—I'll preſent you to our " Captain—he'll give you a hearty wel- " come, take my word for it."

" I little heeded this very eloquent perſuaſive—but I was worked up to a pitch of madneſs—I was on the point of ſubmitting to a meanneſs which I could not endure—all the ſtrange wildneſs of my mind was intereſted in the ſcheme—there was a gloomy deſperation in it that ſuited me at the moment, and I promiſed the ſergeant that I would join him the next day.

" The landlady had retired while the bargain was made—the man went—and I paſſed

paſſed the reſt of the evening in a confuſion of mind that I cannot deſcribe.—

" The next day the ſergeant called upon me—took me to the commanding officer, by whom I was approved of; and after going through the cuſtomary forms, I was admitted into the—regiment of light horſe.

" I returned to the pot-houſe in the Borough, paid my reckoning, and then removed to my quarters in Shoreditch. —" During the whole of this time my mind was in a ſtate of inactive ſtupor.—I received the congratulations of my new comrades with a forced vivacity—ſhook heartily the hand of each—and plunged into my new ſituation with the eagerneſs of a man who would ſwallow up one

one pang in another :—and thus by oppoſition of ſuffering, produce a ſort of deſperate mental neutrality.—Had the company been at that moment ordered to ſome diſtant and fatal climate, where we muſt all have periſhed by diſeaſe or in battle—had ſome infectious diſorder at that inſtant been carrying off my comrades, or the ſword of the enemy been mowing them down around me—I think there would have been ſomething of horrible and unnatural ſatisfaction in the ſight!

"In the evening the ſergeant I have mentioned, another fellow who partook of my chamber, and myſelf, met round the kitchen fire.—We ordered liquor in abundance.—I laughed when they laughed—talked as loud as I could—and endeavoured, by wearing the appearance of

of boiſterous mirth, to hide the bitterneſs of my heart!

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

" *Friday Morning.*

" Yeſterday paſſed in a ſtate of unutterable agony.—That very day four years, Gertrude and I had exchanged our vows—the day had never returned, not finding me at leaſt able to cheriſh the remembrance with enthuſiaſm, and to devote its hours to her idea in ſolitude.

" A coarſe, unfeeling, dull fellow, ſlept in the ſame bed with me—the room in which we lay was, if poſſible, more comfortleſs than that in the Borough.—It was in an adjoining new building, which was erected for the purpoſe of enlarging

enlarging the inn, but the owner diſcovering too late that his plan was more extenſive than was neceſſary, he abandoned the ſcheme ere it was half finiſhed. —The chamber was very large, and had been deſigned for a club-room—the floor had never been cleaned ſince it was laid,—oiled paper ſupplied the place of panes of glaſs which were not put into the window frames.

"There were ſeveral long benches in the room, but no chairs—and an immenſe old faſhioned black table, upon which theſe benches were piled, which belonged to the other club-room, but had been removed here as lumber, ſince they had introduced a new one there, intended for this place.

"The

" The bed was without curtains, or top, or hanging of any ſort—four new aſh bed-poſts, completely unfurniſhed, in vain ſolicited ſome ſuitable addition to their bleak nakedneſs :—to complete the comfortleſsneſs of the place, the window frames were but half faſtened, and the cold winds of October howled hollowly through the apartment.

" Here it was that after having the preceding night retired to bed in a ſtate of ſtupid inebriation, as the morning light viſited my ſleepleſs eyes, I firſt remembered that four years ago that day had been ſpent in Gertrude's arms.—The morning was wet and tempeſtuous, the windows rattled their frames, and big drops of rain fell from the damp plaiſter, or ſplaſhed from underneath the windows—till the whole room was inundated.

dated.—I hated my exiſtence—I loathed myſelf even to agony.—At eight o'clock the fellow by my ſide yawningly exclaimed, "Ned, rouſe yourſelf my lad, "we muſt fettle our cattle in the ſtable yonder"—a knell falls not ſo heavily to a dying man, as did that careleſs exhortation to my ſinking heart!

He then threw the filthy rug and blanket (for we had no ſheet) which covered us from the bed—and I was conſtrained (unwilling to diſcover my ſtate of mind,) to follow the example of the man who was near me.—My limbs ached—my head was as if it were caſed in iron—a death-like ſhivering came on me—and I found myſelf nearly unable to ſtand when I quitted this unwholeſome pallet.

"I de-

I deſcended into the ſtable, and after putting on the morning jacket and pantaloons which were deſtined for me—ſubmitted myſelf to be inſtructed in the cleaning and management of my horſe and trappings.

" This buſineſs being over, and the fellow who had been my companion, gone, I threw myſelf on the ſtraw by the ſide of my horſe, and wholly gave myſelf up to reflections of remorſe, and wretchedneſs.

" Gertrude," ſaid I to myſelf, " this " day four years, about this hour, my " ſoul and thine firſt mingled their ex- " iſtence."—I then recalled all the circumſtances of our converſation in the glen at Cathcart Caſtle—the very form of Gertrude was before me—her geſ-

tures—

tures—her tone of voice—her ſpeaking eye—her impaſſioned manner—all thrilled my heart, and filled me with tranſports that may only be conceived by a being in my ſituation.

"I paſſed the whole day in a monotony of anguiſh.—I once or twice crawled into the houſe, but it was only to avoid the repetition of the hoarſe calls of my comrade.—The victuals deſtined for me I carried in my hand from the kitchen, and gave it to a large maſtiff which was chained in the yard.

"Evening came—and I was ſtill ſtretched on the ſtraw, determined not to ſupport life by any further exertions, nor to yield any more to the calls of an exhauſted nature.

"The

"The rain fell in ſheets, the howlings of the maſtiff—the ſobbing of the wind which was pent up in the court—the clamours of the oſtler—and the diſtant merriment and peals of laughter of the taproom, formed the aſſemblage of diſcordant ſounds which diſtracted my ear.—At intervals only I was aware of theſe, for the greater part of the day my ſoul was ſo much abſorbed by its own ſufferings, that I was unconſcious of the effect of any object on my ſenſes.

"The oſtler entered at ſeven o'clock, and put a dirty farthing candle into a broken wire lanthorn, which ſwung in the middle of the ſtable—he had not ſeen me—I was buried in the ſtraw of a diſtant manger.—As the night advanced, a greater gloom and deſolation came over my ſoul—it was all dull drearineſs,

or the jarring recollection of departed bliſs.

" I was in this ſtate—the dog had juſt ceaſed his howlings when a ſolemn ſlow voice addreſſed me—" Is Edmund Oli-" ver here ?"—

" I immediately recognized the tones of the myſterious ſtranger, and raiſing myſelf from the ſtraw, in a tremulous tone replied " Yes."—He looked at me with a fixed ſternneſs—then ſaid—" Art " thou ready to fulfil the will of Heaven " towards thee—wilt thou caſt thyſelf " upon the mercy of thy God ?"

" By this time I was upon my legs, and immediately advanced towards the Unknown—he ſtarted back as I drew near him—" Is it thus," cried he, " that " thou

"thou recompenſeſt the long ſuffering "of thy Heavenly Father, who hath ap- "pointed me to warn thee of the day, "which is nigh at hand, when he will "avenge himſelf of his enemies?"

"Then advancing towards me and ſeizing my ſoldier's coat, "Is this the "livery of the choſen one of God—is "this the white robe of thoſe who have "waſhed themſelves in the blood of the "Lamb?—Thou haſt ſold thyſelf to ſerve "the woman which hath made the inha- "bitants of the earth drunk with the "wine of her fornication.—Thou haſt "put on her gold and her ſcarlet raiment, "thou haſt arrayed thyſelf in her pre- "cious things, and thou art partaking of "the filthineſs of her abominations.

"Thou

"Thou art preparing thyſelf as in a "day of ſlaughter; but know, that for "all theſe things the Lord will bring thee "to judgment, for thou art following "the ſtandard of thoſe who fight againſt "the Lamb and his Saints;—but he "ſhall overcome thee, and the mighty "and honourable who are with thee, and "all Kings, and Rulers, and Prieſts, and "thoſe who traffick with their faith, ſhall "be trodden under foot as the duſt of "the earth!"

"Having uttered theſe words he retired ſo ſuddenly that I was not able to trace his ſteps; the gloomineſs too of the night made it impoſſible for me to ſee him after he had paſſed the ſtable door.

"I began to think that this was either ſome perſon who had a deſign upon me,

or a madman who had taken it into his head to watch my proceedings.—Altogether, both this and his former appearance were ſtrange and unaccountable.

" I threw myſelf again on the ſtraw,—my mind was now even callous to my laſt adventure—and determined to lie there till death ſhould terminate my miſeries.

" About half paſt ſeven, the fellow who lodged with me entered the ſtable.—I aroſe haſtily at his approach.—" Why " what are you about, moping here—By " God, Ned, this won't do—why you " have not been ſeen in the houſe all the " day long—Beſtir yourſelf, man—it is " not time now to repent of what you " have done—Shew yourſelf a man—and " ſet about your buſineſs.—See there—" your horſe is not ſupp'd up for the night—

" By

"By St. George, if the Commander "were here, he'd not let you ſaunter and "pine at this faſhion—No, he'd ſee you "at the devil firſt."

"With this I performed almoſt a repetition of the morning's buſineſs, with as good a grace as I could:—the man ſtanding by me all the time, and ever "ſpurring me on" as he called it, by the ſtimulus of coarſe reproaches, and ſtill coarſer oaths.

"When this buſineſs was ended—as I was rouſed, in order to avoid altercations with my comrade I called for a light, went up to my deſolate chamber, undreſſed myſelf, and with a duller, a more complete wretchedneſs, than I ever before felt, threw myſelf in the loathſome bed.

"This morning was but a repetition of yeſterday's feelings——

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

"*Saturday.*

"As I was paſſing through the kitchen in the inn, I was induced to liſten by hearing a woman ſpeak in tones of paſſionate lamentation to my comrade—"I don't care who or what he is—it is "a deſperate ſhame that a woman ſhould "be uſed ſo in any Chriſtian country."—Here ſhe was interrupted by the entrance of the landlady, who aſked her why ſhe had not called with milk as uſual for many mornings paſt.—"Ah! Ma'am!" cried the woman, "that was what I was "talking about to this Gentleman here.—"I have been ſhamefully treated, and by "his officer too," continued the woman, pointing

pointing to my comrade.—She then unpinned her neck handkerchief and diſcovered her left breaſt much inflamed and ſwoln as if from a violent bruiſe.

"See here, Ma'am, and this in a coun-
"try where they pretend to protect
"the poor; and this too from a man
"who ſays he is fighting for religion."

"But you have not told me how this
"happened, Jenny," exclaimed the land-lady.

"Why you muſt know Ma'am that laſt
"Wedneſday ſe'nnight I was going home
"after ſelling my milk, when as I paſſed
"along Tottenham-court-road, I heard
"ſuch a ſcream as made my blood turn
"cold again.—There was a croud gathered
"round the place where the noiſe came

" from, and I went up to it, and aſked
" an old woman what was the matter."

" Matter," cried the old woman, " they
" ought to be aſhamed of themſelves,
" they are flogging a poor fellow becauſe
" he happened to ſtep out of his ranks
" in time of exerciſe :—he was poor and
" had no one to take his part.—So his
" officer ordered him to be whipped—
" but let him think as he may, God will
" call him to account one day for this—
" take my word for't he'll wiſh that he
" had been more merciful, or I'm not a
" Chriſtian."

" So I was paſſing on and muttered to
" myſelf, It is a ſhame that any mo-
" ther's child ſhould be uſed in this man-
" ner,"—when juſt as the words were out
" of my mouth, ſome man from behind
" ſtruck

" ſtruck me here—pointing to her breaſt.
" —On turning round, I ſaw Captain
" Summerton, who held up his ſtick,
" and with a frightful look cried,
" I'll teach you, Miſtreſs, to ſpeak
" diſreſpectfully of your betters."——
" I crept home with difficulty, and have
" till yeſterday never ſtirred out of
" bed."—

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

His account breaks off ſuddenly here. I will ſend this by to-day's poſt—he will be with me again in a few hours. When I have learned the remainder of his ſtory I will tranſmit it to you—I intend to propoſe to Edmund to accompany me to Ambleſide.

Your's ever,

CHARLES MAURICE.

LETTER XLI.

CHARLES MAURICE

TO

MRS. MAURICE.

Wednesday Night, Twelve o'Clock.

MY DEAR REBECCA,

EDMUND has juſt quitted me—he returned in a few minutes after I had finiſhed tranſcribing his journal for you.

I perceived, when he entered, that he looked gloomy and penſive, as if ſomething had agitated him.

"Good God!" exclaimed he, "how little do the children of proſperity dream of what millions ſuffer?—I have juſt quitted, Charles, a poor fellow who is—"

then

then ſtopping ſhort, he added,—" But I will not anticipate the concluſion of my tale, if you are inclined to liſten to the reſt of my adventures—I will relate them to you—we are alone, and I have nothing at this hour to call me away."

" But firſt, Edmund, let me extricate you from this deteſtable profeſſion. You, my friend, diſguiſed in the badge of ſlavery and cruelty!—My heart turns ſick at the ſight—

He looked very ſad but was ſilent.

" You do not mean, Edmund," continued I, " to enroll yourſelf among thoſe who ſell themſelves to ſlaughter their fellow men—to ſlaughter beings whom you have never ſeen, and who have done you no injury?

"A juſt cauſe is diſgraced by ſuch unjuſt means of defending it—and thus to proſecute an unjuſt cauſe is the very climax of human depravity!—Why, my Edmund, it cannot be, that you will wear the garb of ſyſtematic and deliberate murder, of carnage by wholeſale?—are you to become one of the ravagers of this beautiful earth—are you going forth to deſolate provinces, and to introduce fire and ſword where peace and happineſs formerly dwelt?—Does your heart no longer own the eloquence of the orphan's tear—the widow's pleading—are you quite callous?"

"Be merciful, be merciful, Charles," cried he, "you will drive me to deſperation."

"Come

"Come then with me, Edmund, and be releaſed from this company of earthly fiends."

Again he looked ſad and embarraſſed—I now gueſſed the cauſe of his ſilence.—"Come, Edmund," ſaid I—"I underſtand you"—I took out my pocket-book, and tapping it with my finger, "Here my dear fellow! what ſay you now"—

He gave me a look more eloquent than the choiceſt words—

"Where does your Colonel live?"—"In Piccadilly."

I took him under my arm.——We knocked at the door—a ſervant in ſplendid livery opened it—and upon enquiring for Colonel M'Lean, we were de-

fired

ſired to wait for a few minutes in an antichamber—"My maſter is not yet dreſs'd"—ſaid the man who let us in.

After remaining a quarter of an hour, we were informed that our company was deſired in an adjoining room:—we were uſhered into a ſplendid and luxurious apartment—a breakfaſt ſervice of plate was placed before a young and beautiful female, who was buſied in the duties of the meal.

The Colonel was lying on a ſofa with his legs ſupported by a pillow—he was wrapped in a morning gown: his figure and manner announced ſenſuality, ſloth, and the "inſolence of office."—He did not deign to aſk us to ſit down.—"Well, gentlemen, and what is your buſineſs with me?"

I then

I then briefly told him my errand, and concluded with aſſuring him of my willingneſs to advance any ſum for the liberation of my friend.

"Damn the fellow, what did he 'liſt for,—a few good laſhes would tame him a little—"You are a fool," addreſſing himſelf to me, "to give yourſelf any trouble about ſuch a turncoat—leave him to my care, and I'll anſwer for it he ſhall be cured of his vagaries."

I perſiſted in expreſſing my reſolution—threw down the money, and we retired—after the ſalutation of ſome additional oaths and execrations which he graced, by not unſparingly mingling with them "His Majeſty's" name.

When

When we had returned to Mr. Oliver's lodgings—Edmund graſped my hands, and with looks and geſtures rather than by words—expreſſed his ſenſe of gratitude—I endeavoured to repreſs his overflowing feelings, and begged of him now to conclude his narrative.

"The account I have given of myſelf in writing," he cried, "ſufficiently expreſſes the diſtracted ſtate of my mind. You know, Charles, what my principles are—that they admit not even of reſiſtance to perſonal attack, think then how horrible muſt have been my ſituation—wearing as I did the very inſignia of anarchy and vice,—and eating bread which was bought with groans and tears, and mangled carcaſes, and untimely deaths:—But, my friend—my ſoul had loſt itſelf in the midſt of its troubles—

my

my reaſon was obſcured and ſo diſtorted were my feelings—that the turpitude of an action for a brief while, almoſt became a ſtrange recommendation to it.

" I ſhall not burthen you with a repetition of my unquiet and conflicting ſenſations :—for many days I taſted no food—my wretchedneſs might have prompted me to ſuicide, but that wearied liſtleſsneſs of ſoul that occaſioned moſt of my difficulties, together with a ſecret ſenſe of duty, and of what I ought to be, which never quite forſook me—interpoſed and prevented any poſitive act of deſperation.

" After having perſiſted in refuſing food for many days—I was unawares one evening induced to drink with a fellow ſoldier.—In the ſtate I then was, the leaſt

leaſt quantity of liquor threw me off my guard, and from that time I no longer refrained from uſing the means of ſupporting life;—my paſſions had now been tamed down by phyſical wretchedneſs, and I had a few moments of greater calm than I had hitherto experienced.—The firſt uſe that I made of my returning reaſon was to implore the aſſiſtance of Heaven—and to beg that I might be enabled to undergo with more fortitude the remaining diſpenſations of Providence.

"I met laſt Monday too, with an act of injuſtice, which in a ſmall degree contributed to rouſe my debilitated and fantaſtic feelings:—Ever ſince I have led this outcaſt and incomprehenſible ſort of life, I have frequently had recourſe to liquor with a view of drown-

ing

ing reflection, and torturing activity of mind.

"On Sunday afternoon I had had recourse to this means of escaping my indwelling enemy—the day had been spent in listlessness and inactivity—the sun had shone with unwholesome splendour against the brick walls of my prison—the gay dresses of the persons who crowded the streets—the merry chiming of bells, and all the aukward and heartless gaiety of a city, oppressed my heart. I remembered how happily I had passed the day in more quiet and interesting scenes.

"Towards four o'clock in the afternoon we were summoned to perform our exercise—I was almost incapacitated for executing my part.

"The

"The Colonel obſerved my ſituation, and the next day ſent for me to his lodgings—"If I ſee you again in this ſtate, "Sirrah," ſaid he, "I ſhall order you to "be picketted."

"A young prig of an officer, with the face of a girl—and not ſo high as my ſhoulders, exclaimed, "Picketted! I "never ſaw any one picketted."—The Colonel called me back, and giving me into the charge of two ſtout fellows who were preſent, cried, "I ſhall make an "example of you now." Then turning to the young coxcomb, who had all the appearance of ſome emaſculated ſprig of modern nobility, "You'll like the ope-"ration." The youngſter replied, "Yes." And thus, Charles, was I obliged to ſtand a whole hour, ſuſpended by one thumb with the hollow part of my foot, bared

for

for the purpoſe, upon a piece of wood not larger than a ſixpence, to gratify the loathſome whims of this pampered mountebank.

"I need not deſcribe to you the effect ſuch a circumſtance as this had on my mind—that it rouſed my ſenſe of injuſtice—excited my ſlumbering principles—and awakening me from the dream of palſying ſenſibilities—again reſtored to me the nerve of manhood, and the ſtifled energies of an aſpiring and reſtleſs mind.

"Theſe ſenſations, ſpringing, as it were, from the grave of moral dignity, were aſſiſted by a third circumſtance ſtill more revolting and horribly cruel than either of the former ones:

"My

"My comrade the day before yeſterday aſked me to go and ſee a poor fellow who was lying at the York Hoſpital, that he was formerly acquainted with. I complied with his requeſt.—We paſſed through ſeveral wards, and at laſt approached the bed of the invalid—

"Well, Jack, and how do you do?" cried my companion.

"So, ſo—" ſhaking his head, replied the poor fellow who was lying in bed; "my ſores are mortally painful—God "knows when I ſhall be about again."

"What ails you, maſter? you ſeem to be in much pain," ſaid I to him.

"Oh, Sir," exclaimed a female who was ſobbing by the bed-ſide, "this comes

"of

"of going in the army—murrain take
"'em—they have——killed my Jack.
"You muſt know, Sir, that he and I
"lived in Birmingham, and were very
"well to do till this curſed war—we
"worked at the manufactories, and he
"earned a guinea, and I ſometimes
"brought home fourteen ſhillings a
"week—But, Sir, ſoon after this war
"broke out, our maſter turned off half
"of his work-folks, and we went about
"firſt to one, and then to another, to
"get ſomething to do, but nobody would
"employ us—We had two children and
"I was big with the third—and we now
"began to want bread to eat—we had
"ſold our little furniture, and pawned
"all our clothes—when things were thus,
"the ——— regiment of foot came to
"Birmingham, and was ſtationed there

"for

" for a month—one night my huſband
" came home in liquor, (which he had
" never done before) and he ſaid as how
" he was going for a ſoger—I cried as if
" my heart would break, all the night
" long,—but this was of no uſe—for go
" he would:—Well, Sir, the upſhot of all
" was that we were ordered up to London.
" It was my huſband's turn a month ago
" (God help him) to ſtand centinel on the
" parade yonder (pointing out of the
" window.) He was as ſober, Sir, as I
" am now, when an officer, reeling drunk,
" ſtaggered up to him, abuſing him foully,
" and ſaying as how he was in liquor—
" Now Jack bore all this ill uſage a long
" time, till the wretch fetched him a blow
" on his face, and made his noſe bleed
" deſperately—at laſt he ſaid " I am on
" duty, Sir. I'll take my oath that I'm
" as ſober as ever I was in my life, and
" if

" if you ſtrike me again, thof you be a " gentleman I'll knock you down."— " The officer did not heed him, but fell " on him again, Sir—Jack could hold " out no longer, and he laid the man at " his feet. Well, Sir, he was tried for " this by a court-martial, and ſentenced " to receive a thouſand laſhes—the pa- " riſh where it happened took up the " cauſe, and brought the affair before " the King—but for all this my poor " huſband had 800 laſhes—What ſay you " to this, Sir?"

" I turned to the man, who confirmed with the addition of many execrations the truth of the woman's tale—and then, after putting a crown into his hands, eſcaped from the room.—" Good God!" cried I, " is this the ſyſtem with which I " am leagued?"

" From

"From that moment till the day I saw you I was meditating my escape—my passions were roused to frenzy: but you, Charles, were a second time destined to be my saviour——"

Here he paused, and throwing his arms round my neck, expressed his feelings by half-suppressed groans—then cried,—"This was the poor fellow I went to see "this morning."

Here he begged me to excuse him, while he settled matters at the inn, and after having done this, and put on his former dress, passed the remainder of the day with me.

Farewell, dear Rebecca,

CHARLES MAURICE.

P. S. To-morrow I shall call on Lady Gertrude—if she is better, Oliver and I shall set forward immediately for Worcester.

LETTER

LETTER XLII.

CHARLES MAURICE
TO
MRS. MAURICE.

Thursday.

MY DEAR REBECCA,

I HAVE not yet called on Lady Gertrude, but ſhall do it this evening or to-morrow. I write this to inform you of a converſation which has paſſed between Edmund and myſelf, and which has ended in convincing him that he ought to take up his reſidence with me.

After breakfaſt this morning, Roger Oliver being retired to his engraving room, I thus addreſſed Edmund—

" And now, my dear friend, how do you think of fixing yourſelf? What is

the way of life which you would like to lead?"

"I have not yet thought on the ſubject. I am ſo recently ſnatched from the thraldom of paſſion and error, that my feelings have not yet ſubſided ſufficiently to allow me the exerciſe of clear reaſon in the determination——" "But, my Edmund, you ſtill, I truſt, aſſent to the principles which we took ſo much delight in contemplating ſix months ago?

"At that time, my friend, you allowed that while a human being poſſeſſed one ſhilling of property, while there was one moment of time which he might diſpoſe of, while he had one faculty of mind and body, he owed the devotion of all theſe in the moſt beneficial way that he could diſcover to the ſociety of which he made a part.

"It

"It ſeemed to us, my friend, that man was merely the *ſteward*, not the *poſſeſſor* of theſe means of operating on his fellow beings. You have not deſerted theſe principles, have you?"

"No, my Charles, nor ſhall I till my reaſon forſake me."

"Well then, my Edmund, let me ſpeak my ſentiments freely to you. Be an impartial liſtener—forget yourſelf—forget me—and only think of us as ſtanding in the relation to each other of two indifferent perſons. You are at this moment deſtitute of worldly poſſeſſions: till lately you deemed that the want of them was the neceſſary conſequence of your father's diſpoſal of his wealth; lately the truth has been revealed to you, and you have now the merit of refuſing a for-

tune becauſe it can only be gained by the downfal and calamity of human beings. This refuſal is ſo much what I ſhould have expected from you, that I forbear to expreſs my approbation: by a contrary mode of conduct you would almoſt have forfeited my eſteem. You are now, then, deſtitute, and *voluntarily deſtitute*, of worldly poſſeſſions; but I happen to have more than I know what to do with. Human wants are few, and I deem it criminal, indeed an actual robbery, to devote more to myſelf or family than would fall to our ſhare, were property equalized. I ſhall educate my children with theſe ſentiments, I ſhall accuſtom them to phyſical hardſhips, they ſhall be preſerved in utter ignorance of artificial wants and manners, till the impreſſions ariſing from them cannot alter the character of their minds. Had

I the

I the wealth of worlds I ſhould not wiſh them to poſſeſs more than I deem would fall to their ſhare as ſingle individuals of a brother race. Their independence ſhall be of that unchangeable nature, which ariſes from phyſical robuſtneſs, and firmneſs of mind, rather than from vaſt poſſeſſions.

"Thinking thus, Edmund, with regard to myſelf and family, and deeming myſelf bound by an eternal law infinitely ſuperior, and of ſublimer authority than the ſophiſticated inſtitutions of men, to conſider my property as a *power* veſted in my hands wherewith to do the greateſt poſſible good, I ſolicit you therefore to aſſiſt me in the ſtewardſhip of my poſſeſſions, to take off a part of my burthen of reſponſibility, in ſhort, to ſweeten the ſenſations connected with my wealth,

by ſharing the duties and the pleaſures annexed to it.

" Hitherto, Edmund, I have only mentioned the reaſons which reſpect myſelf, ariſing as well from intereſt as from moral obligation, which have induced me thus to addreſs you. I would further ſuggeſt, that your talents make the acceptance of the propoſal on your ſide a moſt ſerious duty. Talents are, as I ſaid before, energies committed to our truſt, and ought to be employed in the way which ſeems moſt conducive to the general good.

" Were you, my dear friend, from this day to devote them to the accumulation of a perſonal independence (ſetting aſide the chances which there are of your failing) you muſt inevitably give up every idea

idea of being a benefactor to your ſpecies, or a competitor for mental greatneſs. It becomes a duty relative to their ſituations in the mechanic and merchant, to ſtifle intellect and repel the delicious exuberances of genius.

"All your life muſt be employed with a view to this one paltry end; you muſt cruſh powers of mind—annihilate impetuoſity of conception—trample on the glow of Benevolence—on the wild originality of Heaven-directed feelings.

"In ſhort you muſt turn Atheiſt, and believing that ſomething has been made in vain (for ſurely the man of talents poſſeſſes ſomething more than the common man,) begin the remorſeleſs work of deſtruction, and tame yourſelf down to plodding imbecility. I had rather,

Edmund, ſee you in the grave than that you ſhould act thus.

No, my dear fellow, think that God himſelf ſpeaks through my organs, commanding you to accept of a ſituation, in which your powers become your own—a ſituation in which you may uſe them for the improvement and inſtruction of millions—a ſituation which relieves you from the debilitating preſſure of every phyſical and moral inconvenience;—a ſituation from which the Grand and the Sublime around us will ever aſſume new characters to your lively mind, will feed your imagination, and diſcipline your ſoul to an incalculable loftineſs of conception. Come, Edmund, delay not—It is the voice of truth, and of the Deity, which calls you and conjures you not to heſitate, by the majeſty of virtue,

and

and by the feelings of benevolence bounded by exiſtence alone."

As I concluded the laſt ſentence his face was drowned in tears. I had completely convinced his reaſon and he was ſilent—yet I perceived ſome embarraſſment and confuſion from rebellious and lingering feelings—he evidently ſtruggled with himſelf—he meaſured the room in long ſtrides—he was much agitated—however in a few minutes he turned towards me and with an inexpreſſible look exclaimed—" I yield—I yield—I could call myſelf thy debtor, but I will not."

We embraced with ſouls that knew but one identity, our tears flowed abundantly, our very hearts were united. This,

Rebecca, was the moſt delicious moment of my life.

When I have called on Gertrude, we ſhall endeavour to fix a day for leaving London. Edmund and I are in hopes of prevailing on Miſs Oliver to accompany us to Ambleſide: he has juſt written to her to go forward with us.

Edmund ſeemed much wounded at the death of his mother. She was not a ſuperior character, but he feels on all occaſions: beſide the event happening in connection with his diſappearance, made it the more affecting. He has not mentioned Gertrude's name. I ſhall not introduce the ſubject till after his next viſit.

Edmund

Edmund and I have been debating on the propriety of informing Roger of Margaret M'Brair's ſtory. It is certain that he would avail himſelf of the diſcovery; for though he now cares little for wealth, he has a ſtrong ſpirit of revenge. As a moral agent, Mr. Oliver ſeems to have a right to all the data which can or ought to actuate his conduct: in this point of view it ſhould ſeem an indiſpenſable duty to put him in poſſeſſion of a fact, which may tend to the developement either of the merit, or demerit of his character:—on the other hand nothing but evil would be the reſult: we clearly foreſee the method he would take, we conſider wealth as a very equivocal bleſſing, indeed rather as a curſe to a man of doubtful character, finally, taking the affair in its old

point

point of view, that the diſcloſure would be a ſource, a certain ſource of miſery to ſeveral individuals, and moreover, to no one a certain benefit, we have determined upon ſilence.

God bleſs you!

CHARLES MAURICE.

LETTER

LETTER XLIII.

CHARLES MAURICE
TO
MRS. MAURICE.

Friday.

MY DEAR REBECCA,

I CALLED yeſterday evening as I intended on Lady Gertrude, and learned from the ſervant, that her diſorder ſeemed to have taken a turn. I did not ſee her; ſhe had ſwallowed a compoſing medicine and it was neceſſary, that ſhe ſhould be kept quiet for the remainder of the evening.

Edmund has diſcovered who this myſterious ſtranger is. On paſſing to-day along the ſtreet in which his brother lives, he obſerved him enter a court; he

he haſtily followed him, and found that he mounted a ſtep ladder which led to a ſmall room; he aſcended the ladder, knocked at the door, and was admitted into a diminutive chamber which beſpoke the utmoſt penury in its inhabitant.

The man accoſted him in a ſtyle as incomprehenſible as before, announcing to him a miſſion from the Deity, which he was continually alluding to, and which ſeemed indeed to make a part in all his aſſociations.

After the unknown perſon had eaſed his ſpirit of the burthen which oppreſſed it, had in vague terms and trite ſcriptural alluſions warned Edmund not to diſobey the calls of Heaven, he became more cool,

cool, and was brought to ſomething like rational converſation.

Edmund found that he was a diſciple of Brothers, the newly-riſen prophet. His tenets were, "That all men who now lived had ſprung from Adam as a common ſtock; that they all were coeval with him, and had lived together with him in a paradiſiacal ſtate; that theſe men, wanting to know ſomething beſides what they did know, which was good, and impregnated with the Divinity, were indulged in their reſtleſs ſpirit, and admitted to the knowledge of evil; that in conſequence they fell, and had ſince that time been undergoing a proceſs of expiation and purification, by tranſmigrating from one body to another; that no perſon now living, till Brothers aroſe, was aware that he had paſſed through

through theſe ſucceſſive ſtages; but that at the approaching conſummation, each one would be aware of the different characters he had aſſumed; that Brothers had been the ſon of Jeſus Chriſt's brother, conſequently was God's nephew.

"That this World was hell, and the end of all things was at hand; and that Brothers was the perſon choſen to announce it to the world."

The ſingular conduct of this Enthuſiaſt was thus explained. He had often ſeen Edmund paſs to and fro near Mr. Oliver's: the ſtrongly marked lines of his countenance had attracted the pious man's attention.

It is a uſual concomitant of perſons of his character to explain a human ſympathy

pathy by a divine impulſe: he had ſince that time followed his ſteps wherever he went, and being worked up to an unuſual pitch of feeling by the ſtrangeneſs of the place, had imagined that the pothouſe was the ſcene deſtined for his converſion.

The mind ſeems generally prone to connect particular dates with imaginary divine communications; he had thence probably become impreſſed with the idea that his miſſion would that day month be confirmed, and its effects made manifeſt on Edmund's mind.

The man ſays he is going to Jeruſalem immediately with all that are to be ſaved: he knows no one on this ſide of the grave who loves him, and he is happy—he is ſingle—ſolitary—ſolitary as God

God himſelf; the univerſe to him is compoſed of elements with which he has nothing to do. We learn from a neighbour that he eats next to nothing, and only drinks water: yet, this being, from the poſſeſſion of one darling idea which fills his mind, is ſupremely bleſt.

Such is the power of religious enthuſiaſm.

God bleſs you!

CHARLES MAURICE.

LETTER

LETTER XLIV.

CHARLES MAURICE
TO
MRS. MAURICE.

Sunday.

DEAR REBECCA,

UNFORTUNATE Gertrude! The circumſtances which led me to ſuppoſe Edmund was dead, are diſcovered. I went yeſterday to Gower-ſtreet, and was informed that Lady Gertrude was better. After waiting ſome time, her ſervant delivered a meſſage from her, informing me that her miſtreſs would be glad to ſee me the following day.

I ſaid nothing of my call, or of my engagement for to-day to Edmund, who ſcrupulouſly avoids mentioning Gertrude's

trude's name. I fear his heart broods the more for this reſerve.

I found her reclining on a couch: the brilliance of her countenance and the impetuoſity of her manner, had wholly deſerted her. Her cheeks were ſunken and pale, her lips were livid, her voice tremulous, her eyes filmy and fixed, and her appearance beſpoke a perſon relieved indeed from the violence of her feveriſh attack, but ſinking very rapidly in a decline.—She bowed her head, and faintly exclaiming, "This is very good of you, Mr. Maurice," burſt into tears as I entered.

I ſat myſelf in ſilence by her; my feelings were too much excited to allow me utterance; the once enthuſiaſtic and ſpirited Gertrude ſo fallen!—It was more

more than I could bear—I wept myſelf. "Alas," ſaid ſhe, taking my hand, and looking at me with an expreſſion of unutterable gratitude, "the time is now come—my prophecy is fulfilled!—I am deſtitute and friendleſs!"—I aſked her what ſhe meant—"D'Oyley, D'Oy-"ley," ſhe vehemently cried, then ſtriking her hand paſſionately againſt her forehead, "D'Oyley is—the man I adored—is—is—no more."

Saying this, ſhe drew from her pocket ſome papers, which ſhe informed me contained a narrative of the late events which had befallen her, and of which I was ignorant. She looked fearfully as ſhe put them into my hand—"Theſe, Mr. Maurice," ſhe exclaimed, "will account for my conduct, and will enable you to form ſome opinion of the mode

mode in which I ought to proceed;" then, again breaking forth in a paſſionate and delirious manner, ſhe continued—"for I am bewildered—confounded—I am undone—loſt for ever!"

This narrative was contained in letters which had paſſed between Lady Gertrude and D'Oyley, interſperſed, and connected together, with Gertrude's remarks: it was evidently ſo drawn up as to be intended for my peruſal.

To Mr. CHARLES MAURICE.

Sir,

I HAVE put together this narrative in order to bring my ſituation more clearly before you. I have formed an high

high opinion of your head and heart. You will by means of this packet learn the extent of my calamity.

Your's,

GERTRUDE SINCLAIR.

After having peruſed this note which prefaced the other letters, I put the papers into my pocket, and turning towards Gertrude, obſerved that her cheek was even paler than before—her eye more languid and heavy, and her whole frame wearing an appearance of debility and exhauſtion. "Lady Gertrude, I fear much," I cried, "that you are more indiſpoſed than you are willing to confeſs?"

"No—no—no"—ſhe replied with faint wildneſs, and ſunk away on the ſofa,

as

as one dying. I rang the bell, her ſervant adminiſtered ſome cordials to her, and ſhe was ſufficiently reſtored to be removed to her bed, where I left her, much doubting whether I ſhould find her alive to-day.

When I came to Mr. Oliver's, I ſhut myſelf up in the bed-room, and making an apology to Edmund for not appearing for ſome hours, proceeded to the peruſal of the following narrative:

"The evening ſubſequent to the converſation which paſſed between you," (I was throughout addreſſed in the ſecond perſon) "and Mr. D'Oyley on the ſubject of politics, I received the following letter:

"MADAM,

"MADAM,

"It is with unfeigned reluctance that I impose upon myself this unpleasant task.

"Prepare yourself, I beseech you, for information which will much confound you; and at the same time trust that the writer is deeply wounded in the obligation he feels himself under to criminate a friend, and snatch the delicious delusion from a soul so deserving of happiness as your's.

"Know then, Madam, that I have just learned that he who *was* my friend, *Mr. D'Oyley*, is recently married to an elderly lady, of a large fortune, in the Isle of Wight—that he was impelled to

this ſtep by debt, and the known ſeverity of his parents; this event took place long ſubſequent to his acquaintance with you, which I think I heard him mention commenced two years ago in London.

"I further learned, that he is now expected by his lady at Cowes; who has ſpent the ſummer there for the benefit of her health, and that his preſent abſence is on pretence of ſome urgent buſineſs with his parents.

"The letters which he has tranſmitted to you, have been conveyed under cover to Briſtol, and there put into the office, that the poſt-mark might not diſcover his treachery.

"Though

"Though I am perſonally unknown to you, believe that my ſervices are ever at your command—

"I am, Madam,

"Your humble ſervant,

"HENRY CLAREMONT."

"*Briſtol, Oct.* ——

I ſank on the floor, and for many hours remained in a ſtate of complete inſenſibility.—When I was ſomewhat recovered, I found that I had been conveyed to my chamber.—I enquired for D'Oyley, but he had quitted the houſe—the next day I wrote the following letter, directed to him at Briſtol.

"And is this, D'Oyley, the reward of the confidence I have placed in you?—

is it thus that you have triumphed over my proſtrate ſoul?—

"Oh Edward, Edward—that letter would have been torn by me to atoms, would have been trodden under my feet, and for ever blotted from my remembrance, if the general tenour of your late conduct had not too well corroborated it.—Great God! D'Oyley, and is it for this that we ſpurned at prejudice?—laughed at the forms of men?—is it for this that we have abandoned all inſtitutions, and poſitive rules, and have thrown ourſelves into the amazing depths of intellectual calculation, unbiaſſed, ſave by the character of the paſſing moment?—Is it for this that I ruſhed into thy arms and exclaimed, "I am thine for ever"—for this that I have ſold my *fair name among my ſex?*——I now under-

underſtand too well your objections to marriage—your well feigned averſion to all barriers in the generous impulſes of an independent mind:—I ſacrificed my perſon in the tumult of conflicting paſſions, the very day in which Edmund diſappeared!—poor misjudging mortal that I have been!—Had I ſacrificed it, and enjoyed thy love, thy confidence, the devotion of thy heart, and the excluſive poſſeſſion of thy mind as a return, though I were branded with infamy, ſecluded from ſociety, and ſhunned as a foul pollution by the whole world, I had made a cheap, a moſt fortunate purchaſe—but now, D'Oyley, what ſhall I ſay—

"I can only call upon thee, and tell thee that I am wretched indeed!—

"GERTRUDE SINCLAIR."

In the courſe of the day I received the following letter:—

"I confeſs the truth of all the circumſtances contained in Claremont's letter, but he ſhould not have been the firſt perſon to have revealed them.——To apologize, or make proteſtations were now idle—you ſhall have a ſtatement of my conduct; and when you are acquainted with the nature of the circumſtances which ſurround me, you will not condemn your adoring Edward.

"My parents are rich Quakers—I was educated in all the peculiarities of the ſect—theſe peculiarities were laid as much ſtreſs on as the moſt important moral duties:—or rather, the former and latter were ſo confounded and blended in my mind, that I perceived no

no diſtinction between them.—My parents from their immenſe wealth (which, by the way, a Quaker ought never to poſſeſs) abandoned the ſpirit, though they retained the forms of ſimplicity. they had no objection to luxuries, carriages, plate, &c. but theſe luxuries muſt be diſtinguiſhed by the hollow *costume* of the ſect.—Thus educated, and having my pride and paſſions pampered by every indulgence, I ſoon grew weary of the ſectarian reſtraints, and as theſe, in the opinion of thoſe around me, were commenſurate with moral merit, I at the ſame time burſt all the barriers of decorum and decency. In ſhort, Madam, I became much involved in pecuniary matters.—About this time I was introduced to a circle of Philoſophers in Briſtol, and ſoon imbibed their tenets.—My acquaintance, you may remember,

with you commenced at a reading party in Weſtminſter—from the moment I ſaw you, my paſſions, my heart, my underſtanding, all owned your influence.

" We had frequent opportunities of meeting—our common love of ſpeculation promoted our intimacy, and we formed an indiſſoluble union.

" Laſt ſummer my debts increaſed to ſuch a height, that I was obliged to have recourſe to ſome expedient:—to have mentioned the matter to my father would have been madneſs. Towards the latter end of Auguſt I made an excurſion to the Iſle of Wight, and after dancing one evening at a ball given at the Aſſembly-rooms at Cowes, received the polite offer of her hand and purſe from a dowager of immenſe fortune, who was reſiding

reſiding there for the benefit of her health.

"I was at that inſtant curſing my ſtars, and diſtracted with pecuniary embarraſſments—In a fit of frenzy I wrote an anſwer expreſſing my willingneſs to accede to the lady's terms, and in leſs than a week we were married.

"My paſſion for you, Gertrude, remained unchangeable.—My principles taught me to deſpiſe opinion—I reconciled concealment from the wretchedneſs I knew a diſcloſure would bring to your heart—I hoped and truſted, that I ſhould be ſpeedily delivered by the death of Mrs. D'Oyley, from the burthen of her connection.

"Matters have turned out otherwiſe—the affair is blazed abroad—and in order not to incur the ſcandal of infidelity and murder, I muſt ſet off immediately from Briſtol—truſting that hearts ſo united as ours, can never be ſhaken by adverſe fortune. I remain as formerly,

"Your devoted

"EDWARD D'OYLEY."

In my then ſtate of mind, this letter brought with it all the ſtings and tortures of inſult.—I threw myſelf on the floor of my room, and was in a ſtate of diſtraction the reſt of the day.

I was in this ſituation when you called, and being then doubtful how my misfortunes might terminate, begged of you to defer your departure from London.

"My

"My ſufferings were not a little increaſed by the diſappearance of Edmund; though the warmth of my feelings had made me yield to a new impreſſion, Edmund was by no means indifferent to me, and I often exclaimed, in the bitterneſs of my ſoul, "I am now become the very ſcourge of thoſe who know me, and the murderer of Edmund."

I was in this temper of mind when a ſecond letter arrived from Briſtol, informing me that Edward had fought with Claremont, and "in conſequence of his wounds had died."

This was written by Claremont himſelf, who was ſetting off immediately for the Continent, to eſcape the reproaches of Edward's friends.

D'Oyley,

D'Oyley I ſuppoſe had meditated this, as a means of inſuring what he conceived an honourable death from the moment of his diſappearance, and he adopted the indifferent and compoſed ſtyle of his letter, in order to lull my ſuſpicions—for he well knew my utter deteſtation of the unmanly practice of duelling:—indeed he himſelf condemned it in ſpeculation—but his confuſion at this time tyrannized over him—his character was gone,—his ſenſe of ſhame ruined him—and his paſſion for me, which ought to have actuated him to ſome noble effort, only accelerated his deſtruction.

I had received this letter a week before our laſt interview previous to my ſeizure—your eye caught its contents as it lay upon the table—I perceived it by

by your manner—I felt then too ſtrongly the weight of my miſeries; my ſoul had been pampering itſelf in ſolitary wretchedneſs for ſeveral days—my reaſon gave way—and the violent attack from which I am now recovering has been the conſequence.

Yet, Sir, I have *one evil* greater to bear than theſe!—my ſoul is not of puny growth; it feels its own ſtrength!—I could ſtruggle againſt theſe evils, I think I could—I ought to forget a man who was not worthy of me:—it is true that I paſſionately loved him—but love, as an uncalculating and blind impulſe is weak, and no paſſion ſhall prove omnipotent over me, which has not for its baſis a perception of fitneſs in the object!—But, Sir, one greater calamity awaits me—I ſhall ere long be a mother—

an

an unmarried mother; to hope any thing from my own family were madneſs—were idiocy; my ſpirit revolts from this confeſſion of weakneſs—from this claim upon an individual; but I feel as if I had not long to live—miſery for myſelf is to be endured—but my unborn, my helpleſs babe—that thought diſtracts me—where ſhall I fly?—Oh God! I knew not that there was ſuch agony within the compaſs of human wretchedneſs—till now the tale of abandoned mothers, and outcaſt orphans, paſſed over my ſoul and was forgot!

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

Here, my Rebecca, ends this moſt affecting ſtory.—You evidently ſee, in this caſe, the horrible effect of playing with human paſſions, and throwing down wantonly

wantonly the barriers which religion and morality have erected—and of adopting a method of cold and generalizing calculation in conduct, which ſtands aloof rom nature and human ſympathies.

Poor Gertrude—I ſhall call on the ſufferer again to-day, and as her ſituation will render my longer reſidence here a duty—I ſhall endeavour to haſten Edmund's journey to Worceſter. Miſs Oliver has claims on him as a ſiſter, which it is his duty to attend to—beſides I am anxious for him to quit London—there are many aſſociations with the place, unfavourable with the reſtoration of his mind—and moreover I could wiſh at preſent to keep from him the affecting ſituation of Lady Gertrude.——God forbid that they ſhould meet!—it would be inevitable

inevitable ruin to both of them—Edmund's mind would ſink under a repetition of his agonies—and Gertrude's health is too feeble for her to bear the interview.

Farewell once more!

When, my Rebecca, ſhall we meet again?

C. MAURICE.

LETTER

LETTER XLV.

EDMUND OLIVER
TO
Miss OLIVER.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I WRITE merely to inform you, that as Maurice is detained in town by ſome particular buſineſs—I ſhall ſet off for Worceſter to morrow in the mail.—— When we meet, you ſhall have the hiſtory of the laſt four years of the life of your unfortunate Brother, which I hope will in ſome meaſure reconcile you to his paſt eccentricities.

Believe me, dear Ellen,

Your affectionate

EDMUND OLIVER.

LETTER XLVI.

EDMUND OLIVER
TO
CHARLES MAURICE.

Pentonville, Worcestershire.

I ARRIVED here yeſterday evening after a journey, during which nothing occurred of ſufficient importance for me to relate it to you.

Ellen was overjoyed at meeting me—ſhe is little altered ſince I left her—the ſweetneſs of her ſoul prevents her features from undergoing any great changes.

She looks rather unwell now—the death of her mother has much afflicted her,—though perhaps the apparent paleneſs

neſs of her countenance is to be attributed to her mourning dreſs.

I have yet ſaid but little to her on the ſubject of my adventures—I intend however, the firſt quiet opportunity, to give her an exact detail of my paſt life. —She has never upbraided me—her blue eyes are frequently turned towards me with an inquiſitive and anxious look. —She graſps my hand and bathes it with her tears—Ah my Charles!—how ſweet is the connection of a ſiſter—it has all the endearing intimacy of friendſhip—the ſweet ſoftneſs and delicacy of love, without its turbulent and agitating paſſions:—It is more tender than the former —leſs impetuous than the latter—and poſſeſſes the charm of thorough confidence which belongs to both.

My

My ſoul is ſo ſick of expectation in this world—has been ſo often diſappointed in its mortal hopes, that I wiſh now for ſcarcely any thing beyond a quiet and green retreat, to which Ellen and I might retire, and enjoying each others kindly and affectionate intercourſe, melt down the reſt of our days in a meek and ſubdued peacefulneſs.

My mornings ſhould be paſſed in reading, and literary purſuits; my evenings I would devote to my ſiſter, in diſburthening the accumulated feelings of my heart. Each day we would wander through ſome intereſting ſcene near our dwelling, watch the floating clouds, pore in the paſſing ſtream, obſerve the various foliage of each tree, animate the meadow with our innocent and pure feelings, and give to each object of nature a

tribute

tribute of grateful ſenſation—the overflowings of a humanized ſoul!

There is a name which I dare not mention, that ſtill will haunt my mind, when I indulge in theſe ſhapings of imaginary bliſs. Ah! my friend, my heart will long be a "rebel to its own reſolves."

Ellen deſires to be remembered to you.

EDMUND OLIVER.

LETTER XLVII.

EDMUND OLIVER
TO
CHARLES MAURICE

DEAR MAURICE,

MISS Alwynne, Ellen, and I, are juſt returned from a morning's ramble; it has been a fine October day. We croſſed ſome of the meadows at the back of Mrs. Alwynne's houſe, that gently ſlope towards the river Severn, which with broad and tranquil ſtream glides ſlowly through the plain, whoſe level ſkirts (except on one ſide where it is bound by the Malvern hills) dip in the diſtant horizon.

The

The luxuriance of the hedge rows, and the number of orchards which at this time of the year are loaded with fruit, and the general woodineſs of the neighbourhood preſenting at a little diſtance one great foreſt of elms, form beautiful characteriſtics of this ſcenery. The graſs is tufted and thick, and of the livelieſt verdure in the ſurrounding meadows. Every object is now touched with the ſhadowy hues of Autumn—the faint and mellowed gleams of the ſun through white and moveleſs clouds give a more than uſually intereſting combination of light and ſhade—the diſtant hills ſmile more ſweetly in the ſoftened gleam, and the thick and embowered foreground of wood, now and then diverſified with a grey ſpire, or a peeping cottage, aſſumes a finer conſtraſt of gloom from the faintneſs of the autumnal light.

We

We ſat ourſelves on a bank, whoſe ſides to a conſiderable height were covered by firs. The low wind murmured like the diſtant ocean through the gloomy ſhade—the bank beneath was moſſy, and ere and there broken with tufts of fern, and the dark leaves of the adder's tongue; —at the foot of the bank the red rock ſtarted above the ſurface of the ground, and ſplitting into fantaſtic ſhapes, and forming ſeveral natural caverns, and holes of different magnitude, was waſhed at its baſe by a clear and ever-murmuring brook; beyond this a vaſt meadow ſtretched itſelf till it was loſt in wood. A grey ſpire, and the eaſt window of an ancient village church at no great diſtance, peeped through an opening in the foliage—and on the left hand ſide the hills in majeſtic ſilence overlooked the fertile plain. Here we ſate, contemplating

templating the ſcenery, and watching the flocks which were feeding in the field before us. I obſerved a tear in Miſs Alwynne's eye; preſently ſhe exclaimed, "How few there are in this world, who tho' ſurrounded on every ſide by ſo much lovelineſs, are capable of feeling delight in the contemplation of it! for my part," continued ſhe, "I often ſit muſing on the charms of a proſpect like this till the ſcene dances before my eyes, and looks more like the faint ſhadowings of a better world, than the groſs combinations of reality!"

As ſhe concluded the ſentence, her manner became more animated than I had ever before ſeen it; her voice aſſumed a tone almoſt unearthly, and her eye beamed as if inſtinct with ſpirit.

I ſat myſelf by her ſide. "Ah," cried ſhe, "do not you love the country? does not the quietneſs, the purity, the ſimplicity of its ſcenes fill your heart with delight? Nature to me is ever teeming with freſh varieties, and preſents an inexhauſtible fund of objects ever new and ever moſt intereſting to dwell upon. When I ſee a fine building, a work of exquiſite art which aſtoniſhes is before me; when I converſe with a fellow-being I am impreſſed with the wonderful powers of the human mind, the miraculous organization of a phyſical and moral agent! but when I look at the univerſe as a whole, the ſame ſurpriſing contrivance, as in the former caſe, amazes; and infinitely higher diſcoveries of intellect than in the latter, confound me; and mingled with all this, there ariſes a ſenſe of beauty, a perception of harmony

and

and perfection, which exalt my ſenſations even to rapture!"

She then repeated as with an involuntary enthuſiaſm,

Oh how canſt thou renounce the boundleſs ſtore
Of charms, which Nature to her votary yields;
The warbling woodland, the reſounding ſhore,
The pomp of groves, the garniture of fields:
All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the voice of even;
All that the mountain's ſheltering boſom ſhields,
And all the dread magnificence of Heav'n.—
Oh how canſt thou renounce, and hope to be forgiv'n!

I was aſtoniſhed at the energy of her manner, tempered with delicacy and ſweetneſs which made it the more intereſting. She aroſe after having repeated theſe lines, and upon my requeſting her to accept of my arm, we proceeded to retrace our ſteps.

"We are going," ſaid Miſs Alwynne, "to have company to dinner to-day; I mention this to you," ſhe continued, ſmilingly, "that I may introduce you beforehand to the perſons you will meet."

I thanked her.—"The character of four perſons of the party you will inſtantly diſcern; they are an uncle and aunt of mine with two daughters; their ſon-in-law and his wife, and a girl of ten years of age: but a Mr. Alleyne, who will alſo be preſent, I wiſh you to take particular notice of; he is a young man of conſiderable genius, of unexceptionable morals, and of exquiſite ſenſibility: but the uſefulneſs of theſe qualities is entirely blaſted by an univerſal ſcepticiſm."

"Nothing

"Nothing," I replied, "is more baneful to the mind than this painful ſtate of doubt; to diſbelieve, is the negation of mental activity—the underſtanding in ſuch a ſtate always becomes paſſive—loſes ſimplicity, and ſingleneſs of aim in life—directs its efforts to no one end—never wields its powers with a mighty ſtrength, in fact, is never in poſſeſſion of them; loſes altogether the faculty of marſhalling, and arranging its ideas, and of bringing them forward on any formidable attack. It ſeeks for a reſource in the pleaſures of the paſſing hour; and if the perſon who is unfortunate enough thus to be always heſitating be addicted to no groſs vice, the whole of his time will be ſpent in the frivolous daintineſs of a pampered ſenſibility."

"Such is exactly the case with our friend, I fear he becomes every day more and more prone to the mere pleasures of sensation—however he is entitled to much respect for the possession of many most amiable qualities. I think, Mr. Oliver, you might be of use to him; I have thus particularly introduced him, in order to induce you to cultivate his acquaintance."

I bowed.—We now reached the house, and separated till dinner.

Adieu,

EDMUND OLIVER.

LETTER

LETTER XLVIII.

CHARLES MAURICE
TO
EDMUND OLIVER.

DEAR OLIVER,

I WAS intereſted in the latter part of your letter, in which you mention the probability of your being introduced to a virtuous and amiable ſceptic.

Startle not when I announce my opinion; but I conceive that the perception of truth is by no means in proportion to the extent of the mental powers—in ſhort, that the underſtanding is but one mean of diſcovering it. Is it not a favourite opinion with modern philoſophers, that virtue being an affair of cal-

culation (which I allow it to be) he who is ſuſceptible of the moſt vivid impreſſion—of the greateſt extent of ideas—and of the quickeſt aſſociations (being the beſt calculator) will be the moſt virtuous man?—But, in this mode of reaſoning, my friend, one circumſtance ſeems entirely overlooked. In this world, and in the preſent ſtate of ſociety, a man is as liable to receive perverting impreſſions—impreſſions tending to error and vice, as virtuous, and juſt ones—and the moſt ſuſceptible minds are in the moſt perilous ſituation—my criterion therefore of virtue would not be extent of mental dimenſion, but undebauchedneſs, and ſimplicity of taſte, and ſincerity of intention.

It is incredible how much acuteneſs of moral perception may be attained by the

the moſt ordinary mind, if from rectitude of heart, and ſingleneſs of aim, the talents be directed to one end, the diſcovery of truth, and the practice of virtue.—Intellect, ſo unfavourable is the diſcipline of minds in the preſent ſtate of things, becomes very frequently a pernicious energy (I mean conſidered in relation to the perſon, and *to the part* which his actions have a reference to. As a ſpring in the complex machine of exiſtence, I doubt not but the blackeſt villain is of the moſt eminent utility, and viewed with complacency in relation to his final cauſe, by a preſcient Maker), and if it become not a ſource of unmingled evil, it is moſt probable that it will be brought down to an ordinary ſtandard, when viewed in connection with its uſe from the partial injury done by the prevalence of vice to many of its powers.

I therefore conſider ſcepticiſm as the moſt baneful weed that can choak the human mind, and perhaps it is a weed too which affects the moſt luxuriant ſoils. Do not you believe, that many a poor, humble, pious Chriſtian, endowed ſparingly with intellectual accompliſhments, in an obſcure retreat, and far removed from the temptations of wealth, power, and fame, has diſcovered more moral truth than moſt of thoſe highly diſtinguiſhed by their contemporaries, and exciting, from the vaſtneſs of their capabilities, the adoration of mankind?

Exert yourſelf, then, for this unfortunate mind, to which Miſs Alwynne has introduced you.—We never can be happy till we forget ourſelves, and, living in ſurrounding objects, loſe our own individuality in benefiting others.—No ſcep-

tic

tic can attain this ſtate of ſelf-annihilation—labour then, my dear friend, for the invigoration of a worthy, a well-diſpoſed being.—It is a taſk which cannot fail of bringing its own reward, ſince the effort will at leaſt conduce to the reſtoration of your own palſied and debilitated intellect.

CHARLES MAURICE.

LETTER

LETTER XLIX.

EDMUND OLIVER
TO
CHARLES MAURICE.

DEAR CHARLES,

AS my time is wholly my own, I ſhall devote no ſmall part of it to writing to you.

We had a large family party here yeſterday.—A Mr. and Mrs. Clutterbuck, the paternal uncle and aunt of Miſs Alwynne, with the Miſs Clutterbucks—a Mr. and Mrs. Groutage, with a daughter ten years old, and Mr. Alleyne (together with our domeſtic circle), formed the company.

Mr.

Mr. Clutterbuck is a perſon who, from the loweſt ſituation in life, has raiſed himſelf by perſonal induſtry to the important rank of a man poſſeſſing 100,000l.—His wife joins to exceſſive vulgarity and ignorance, ſome awkward family pride (ſhe being the daughter of a *profeſſional man*), and the moſt oppreſſive oſtentation of wealth. Mr. Groutage, with a little more fondneſs for ſpeculation than his father-in-law, treads in his footſteps, and his *would-be-fine-lady* wife is the poliſhed counterpart of her accompliſhed mother.

The Miſs Clutterbucks are faſhionable in their dreſs—faſhionable in their conſtitutions—faſhionable in their phraſes—faſhionable in the diſpoſal of every particular muſcle of their bodies.

Miſs

Miſs Groutage is pert, and has the polite ſimper of a girl brought forwards as a woman, ere ſhe has the ideas of a baby in leading ſtrings.

Alleyne was the only being to contraſt with this crew of animals, ſcarcely deſerving the name of human.

Mrs. Alwynne was too much of an invalid to come down ſtairs—accordingly Edith acted as miſtreſs of the houſe.

Mr. Mrs. and Miſs Clutterbucks were firſt announced.—"Well, niece, and how do you do," cried the elder lady, reſting her fan againſt her chin, and ſwinging her left arm with the moſt important air imaginable, "how is ſiſter Alwynne?"—"She is very much indiſpoſed," replied Edith, "and I fear will not be able to quit her

"her chamber to-day."—"Poor woman," exclaimed the lady, "it will be a great releaſe when God takes her."—Edith betrayed ſome emotion at this laſt ſpeech. "None of your fine feelings I pray, Miſs—dont ſhew off to me;"—then turning to me, (whom ſhe eyed with an air of ſarcaſtic importance) "there are *others*, Miſs, who may perhaps admire theſe delicate ſenſibilities."—"Pray Sir," addreſſing me, "how long have you been in this part of the world?"—I arrived here the day before yeſterday.—"You are fond of *rural beauties* I ſuppoſe," looking ill-naturedly at Edith, who coloured, and endeavoured to give a turn to the converſation by addreſſing her couſins.

Mr. Mrs. and Miſs Groutage now entered.—"Oh la!—my dear"—cried both the

the Miſs Clutterbucks at once to their ſiſter, "who do you think was at the laſt night's ball?"—"La" with a toſs of the head and a twirl with her fan, "how do you think I can tell!" was the anſwer from Mrs. Groutage—"Why that ſtupideſt of all bores Mr. Alleyne—I believe the man is mad—or in love—or the Lord knows what," exclaimed the elder ſiſter—"you never ſaw ſuch a horrid monſter in your life—I could not get the partner I wiſhed—ſo the idea came into my head that I would take up with him—I pretended to be faint, and ſtaggered from my ſeat to get ſome water—and would you think it—the ſtupid block never moved a limb—I was ready to expire with vexation."—"A very ingenious manuœvre," exclaimed Edith, "it was a pity that its ſucceſs was not equal to its merit—what ſay you when I inform you

that

that this very Mr. Alleyne will be of our party to-day."

"The more ſhame to you, niece," cried Mrs. Clutterbuck, "why dont you know that his attentions to you are townſ-talk long ago."—"While I do nothing, Madam, that deſerves cenſure, I am perfectly indifferent to the comment of my neighbours."—"Very pretty, Miſs, but young ladies will have their own way now-a-days—there's Miſs What do you-call-her, in the Foregate-ſtreet, that goes arm in arm with a young fellow though he has not a ſix-pence in the world—and ſhe has ten thouſand pounds—if I were her mother I'd ſee her at Old Nick firſt—When I was a young girl, *women of character* uſed to behave in another faſhion—if you ſpoke to a man acroſs the room, or curteſied to him at

at an aſſembly—it was enough—but now the young things are ſeen together as *permiscuously* as though all the ladies were ſtreetwalkers.—I was brought up more genteeler than any of you here, and I'm ſure I ſhould have fainted if a gentleman offered me his arm."

"Oh the ſavages!" exclaimed the two Miſs Clutterbucks.——Mr. Alleyne now preſented himſelf at the door, and put a temporary ſtop to this very edifying converſation.

Edith aroſe from her ſeat, and with a dignity tempered with much benevolence, came forward to Mr. Alleyne, and leading him towards me, begged to introduce me particularly to him as a perſon whoſe acquaintance would much intereſt him.—I bowed—ſhe returned to her chair at the

the other end of the room, and Mr. Alleyne placed himſelf by my ſide.

" Pray, Sir," what news is there to-day ? what are the price of ſtocks ?" exclaimed Mr. Clutterbuck to his ſon-in-law, but not gaining a ſatisfactory anſwer from him, he repeated the queſtion to Mr. Alleyne.—" Indeed, Sir, I do not know—I never trouble myſelf about money matters"—replied Mr. Alleyne.—" But ſure, Sir, even a *philosopher* like you," rejoined Mr. Groutage, " may be intereſted in the fate of his country." " When the word country," continued Mr. Alleyne, " expreſſes a track of land inhabited by human beings, I am anxious for its welfare ; but not particularly becauſe I place the pronoun *my* before it." —" Well, Sir," cried Mr. Groutage, drawing up his eye-brows and gathering his

his face into a half-concealed ſneer, "your ſentiment has the recommendation of *novelty*, which perhaps, *in your opinion, is all the merit which a ſentiment ought to have.*"—"Humph," echoed Mr. Clutterbuck, and twirled his thumbs and wriggled his body ſeveral ſtrokes a minute faſter than he did before.

"Though, Sir," cried Mr. Groutage, again turning himſelf towards Mr. Alleyne, "you chuſe to conſider *your country*, and *all countries*, in this diſintereſted point of view, I cannot doubt that you would wiſh to witneſs the proſperity and glory of this kingdom."—"The proſperity and glory of a nation as it is called," replied Mr. Alleyne, "in my opinion are moſtly inſured by individual calamity and oppreſſion."

"Pray,

"Pray, Sir, explain," echoed Mr. Groutage, "I don't underſtand you."

"The court may be ſplendid—the army and navy well manned and formidable, the conqueſts may be extenſive, in a country, where if you examine individual by individual, you will find nothing but penury, diſeaſe, and wretchedneſs—I meaſure the well-being of a ſtate by the number of happy and free perſons, which it contains in any rank of life—not by the navies of other nations ſtriking their flag at the approach of its ſhips—not by the precedence of its ambaſſadors—not by the rich retinue and tinſel mummery of its courts."—

I was delighted with theſe ſentiments of Mr. Alleyne, and liſtened attentively as the converſation continued.

"Your

"Your notion, Sir," again exclaimed Mr. Groutage, "*may be* profoundly juſt, but, in my opinion, the happineſs of a nation *is* in proportion to its glory."—"I believe were a ſtrict enquiry made," continued Mr. Alleyne, "and could we appreciate ſo complex a quality as comfort amid an aggregate multifarious as human exiſtence, that it would be allowed that happineſs is the reſult of virtue, ſimplicity, frugal wants, and unambitious views.—Where the heads of a nation are panting for glory, and holding up a ſhadow, a name rather than a ſubſtance of any value—the lower ranks muſt neceſſarily become reſtleſs—private peace will be inſecure; a joſtling, an encroaching ſpirit will be encouraged, and that very phantom, which its leaders have been ſo madly graſping at, will, in the end, become

come the idol of each individual, till at laſt the whole will ſink deluded and ſelf-deſtroyed."

Another "Humph,"—with a ſudden pauſe in the career of his thumbs from Mr. Clutterbuck,—"But trade—what will become of trade—ſuch a mean ſpirit as this would be the very ruin of our commerce"—His paunch aſſumed a more ſtately ſwell, and his thumbs again elicited the overflowing activity of his mind.

"Why to be ſure, Sir," cried I, "in ſuch a caſe as Mr. Alleyne has been deſcribing, the ſpirit of commerce would inevitably decay"—"Humph, I ſaid ſo—didn't I Mr. Groutage," exclaimed the well-fed merchant.—"Yes, Sir—I believe you had the *merit* of that diſcovery,"

very," rejoined the gentleman with a profound bow of well-diſſimulated contempt—then turning to me, "but you philoſophers hold, don't you, that commerce is an evil?—were the principles of Mr. Alleyne to be adopted, commerce would be at an end moſt certainly, our towns would be depopulated, our magnificent buildings deſerted, and nothing but an inſipid uniformity exiſt."

"This inſipid uniformity, as you are pleaſed to call it, Sir," I cried, "is exactly what Mr. Alleyne is aiming at; at leaſt I imagine ſo from the tenour of his ſentiments." The gentleman of whom I ſpoke bowed aſſent.

Another "Humph," with "odd doctrine—odd doctrine" popped forth from Mr. Clutterbuck.—Mrs. Clutterbuck now caught

caught the alarm, and ſqueezing her neck between her left finger and thumb, toſſing her head a little to the right, and giving a moſt elegant ſweep with her fan, "folks are mad now-a-days," then in a *piano* well contraſted with Mrs. Clutterbuck's *forte*, her daughters breathed forth, "La!—what would become of ladies, if all the ſhops were ſhut?"—

Here the dialogue was put a ſtop to by the ſound of the dinner-bell:—the reſt of the day was ſpent in converſation ſo ſimilar to what I have detailed, that I do not think it worth conveying to you—indeed nothing but an hour's abſolute leiſure could have induced me to load my ſheet with ſo much nonſenſe as I have done.

Your's ever,

EDMUND OLIVER.

LETTER L.

EDMUND OLIVER
TO
CHARLES MAURICE.

DEAR CHARLES,

I HAVE opened my whole heart to Ellen, who has liſtened to me with the moſt affectionate intereſt, and completely admitted my apology for my conduct, ariſing from the vehemence of my feelings.

The life we lead here is of all others the moſt intereſting—were not Mrs. Alwynne's ill health an interruption to our happineſs, I think that my ſufferings would yield to the quiet comfort of this abode.

Mrs.

Mrs. Alwynne is a pattern of perfection;—her character is dignified and perſevering——

——Is "pure and ſternly virtuous,
Yet tender and affectionate; her will
Is holy and unbending, yet that will
Is mild in act; purſuing rigidly
With ſingleneſs of ſoul the work that Heav'n
Has giv'n her to perform, yet bearing ever
Her lofty calling with ſo meek a mien,
That all with mute involuntary awe
Feel ere they *call her good*."——

She is pious and very ſtrict in the obſervance of her religious duty; yet piety and religion are ſeldom the ſubject of her converſation: in ſhort, ſo completely does *she perform* what others only *profeſs*, that her mind is left at liberty to indulge in the ſweeteſt familiarity of ſocial intercourſe.—Such a ſaintlineſs preſides in her manner, ſo much unaffected ſub-

duedneſs and reſignation in her looks, and voice, that ſhe wins the heart irreſiſtibly to virtue, and calms it with a holy peace that belongs only to herſelf.

Mrs. Alwynne is the ſiſter of my father. She is the widow of a clergyman; ſhe married early in life and now ſubſiſts upon an annuity which was left to Mr. Alwynne by a near relation, and in caſe of his death to his widow; but which at her deceaſe reverts to her huſband's connections—ſo that Edith is wholly unprovided for.

Miſs Alwynne is paſſionately devoted to her mother—ſhe never ſpeaks of her but the tear ſtarts in her eye; and the leaſt appearance of increaſe in her dangerous ſymptoms, alarms her even to agony.

The

The old lady's eſtabliſhment conſiſts of but one ſervant. She ſeldom now comes down ſtairs—we are frequently admitted to her chamber—ſhe ſits on her bed with her knitting in her hand, and wholly inattentive to her own ſituation; her face always gleams with a heavenly benignity when ſhe obſerves the ſmile of pleaſure, or the glow of happineſs in our countenances.

She never admits of any thing melancholy around her: ſhe aſſiduouſly repreſſes all gloomineſs of mind, or diſpoſition to forebode evil.—"All good perſons," ſhe ſays, "ought to be happy—the Deity is goodneſs, and happineſs itſelf, and they are ſtruggling to reſemble *him*—they ought then to be ſatisfied in the confidence of his approbation; all voluntary diſcontent—all murmurings—all deſponding

ſponding thoughts are inconſiſtent with the lightſomeneſs, the tranquillity that ought to fill a heart conſcious of meaning well. Come my children," ſhe will ſay, " you have nothing to fear; follow peace with all men—do all the good that you can—above all, cultivate a ſpirit of forbearance, and mutual love; and then, however difficult may be your way of life, you will find a comforter within, a peace which paſſeth all underſtanding, which the world cannot give or take away."

I never, Maurice, in my life, ſaw a perſon who mingled ſo much of the ſpirit of devotion, with ſo unaſſuming a gentleneſs and ſuavity of manners.

She labours under a moſt afflicting diſeaſe—a cancer, which has been gradually

dually ſpreading for theſe many years, yet never is her complaint the topic of her converſation;—and when her pain becomes inſupportable, which it is during two-thirds of her time, ſhe diſmiſſes all her attendants, even her ſervant, and endures it with ſolitary patience.—To ſee another being ſuffer on her account, or a witneſs of her tortures, doubles her affliction. I have ſeen the cheek of Edith ſtreaming with tears, as ſhe has watched the repreſſed expreſſion of pain on her mother's face—ſometimes her emotions burſt forth:—At theſe ſeaſons the pious woman's countenance aſſumes a more heavenly brightneſs—ſhe expreſſes her ſenſe of gratitude, that theſe ſufferings are ſent before her departure from this world, as a means of ſoftening down any remaining harſhneſſes of ſpirit, as the merciful miniſters

of purification to her ſoul;—then ſhe holds out her aged and ſhrunk hand—and while her daughter bathes it in tears, unyielding to, and triumphing as it were in her mortal ſufferings, exclaims, "My Edith, we ſhall meet again!"

Were the moſt hardened unbeliever to view this ſpectacle, I am ſure his heart muſt give way!—Could he, think you, Charles, at a time like this, believe that ſentiments which produce ſuch effects, ſentiments which bring the incenſe of gratitude to the bed of Death, which annihilate even the moſt exquiſite torture—that ſoften the pangs of parting friends with the moſt delicious hopes, that make human beings

———"more than man in that dread hour
When man ſeems meaneſt,"

could

could he believe that ſuch ſentiments have no foundation in the nature of things, were

" the baſeleſs fabric of a viſion ?"

Other paſſions, though not completely gratified, have ſtill their correſponding ends; ſhall the moſt noble of all our feelings, the ſentiment of immortality, a ſentiment which (whatever be their manners, laws, or ſyſtems of morality), pervades in ſome ſhape the breaſt of almoſt all individuals in every climate and nation—which raiſes us above ourſelves —which gives a new character of diſintereſtedneſs to our actions—in ſhort, which ſeems a neceſſary requiſite to any high or meritorious degree of human attainment, which fits and adapts itſelf ſo well to the nature of man—ſhall this be

a *mere phantom* of the mind, or contrary to all analogy (for in other caſes, objects correſpond to our deſires) be at beſt a trick of the Author of nature?

Surely the man who takes into all his calculations the hopes and fears of a future life—who embraces at one wide view a Being of infinite progreſſiveneſs, muſt attain a greater diſintereſtedneſs of mind—the power of darting, as it were, out of himſelf in a higher degree, than he whoſe conduct only reſpects a few frivolous years of precarious, and checquered exiſtence!

Farewell,

EDMUND OLIVER.

LETTER

LETTER LI.

EDMUND OLIVER
TO
CHARLES MAURICE.

DEAR CHARLES,

YESTERDAY afternoon we were invited to ſpend an hour in Mrs. Alwynne's apartment. Edith had been with her moſt of the day. Ellen and I found her on the bed ſupported by two pillows—ſhe had a white bed gown on, and a cloſe cap, ſuited to her night-dreſs, only allowed a few locks of her grey hair to ſtray on her forehead. She had been in excruciating pain the whole of the day—her torture was now ſomewhat ſubſided—her knitting was in her hand—and a large family Bible lay on a ſmall table by her ſide.

"Ellen,

"Ellen," ſaid ſhe to my ſiſter, as ſhe advanced toward her, "I grow worſe and worſe, my feeble frame will not long ſuſtain theſe attacks:" then turning to me, "but it is as natural for me to decay as it is for you to invigorate and flouriſh. My hour of prime is paſt, yours" laying down her knitting, and taking Ellen by the one hand and me by the other, "is yet to come—Oh, my dear young friends, that you may uſe the preſent opportunity, ſo that when you are in the ſituation I now am, you may have the calm ſolace of looking back on a life not ill-ſpent."

Having thus addreſſed us, ſhe deſired us to ſit by her bed ſide.—The ſetting ſun ſhone into the apartment through the half-undrawn curtains—a faint gleam fell on her cheek and forehead, and gave an additional luſtre to her ſaintly eye.

"Would

"Would it not be pleaſant to you," ſhe cried, "to ſaunter out and enjoy the beauties of this fine afternoon?—do not, my children, loſe an opportunity of innonocent happineſs—we never offer up a more acceptable ſacrifice to the Deity than that of a grateful and overflowing heart—Go, my dear young friends, do not impriſon yourſelves with a feeble invalid."

Edith gave her mother a look of affectionate reproach—then cried, "Can you believe that any place where you are not, could be preferable to me to one where you are?—for my *friends here*, I will anſwer that they are ſatisfied with their ſituation."

Mrs. Alwynne finding that we were not inclined to leave her, aſked if I would read

read aloud to her.—I enquired what book ſhe would like.—" Have you any poetry here?" ſhe exclaimed.—I anſwered that I had not, but that Julia de Roubigne, a very intereſting tale, was in my pocket.—" I know the book," exclaimed the good woman, " but it is too melancholy for me—life has enough *real ills*—Is it not wrong, wilfully to " ſickly o'er" our minds with the contemplation and deſcription of imaginary ones?—for my part I have always found it beſt, and moſt conducive to a quiet thankfulneſs, never to indulge in unneceſſary grief and fictitious ſorrows—a dainty ſpecies of ſenſibility is hereby produced, very oppoſite, and perhaps almoſt incompatible with active benevolence.

" Have you not Cowper's Poems below, Edith?"

Her

Her daughter replied in the affirmative—the book was brought, and ſhe begged of me to read the latter part of the laſt book of the Taſk.—As I proceeded, her pains ſeemed wholly to ſubſide—her faintly-agitated features aſſumed an appearance of perfect peace and compoſure—ſave that once a tear ſtarted in her eye—a tear of gladneſs, and rolled ſlowly down her aged cheek.

As I finiſhed, the ſervant ſtepped to the chamber door, and informed us that Mr. Alleyne was below—we were going to retire—"No," ſaid ſhe, "you muſt not quit me yet—I think I am well enough to ſee him."

Mr. Alleyne accordingly was uſhered into the apartment—the good woman took his hand with the cordiality of a mother,

mother, and we each of us reſumed our former ſeats.

"Young man," ſaid ſhe to our viſitor, after ſome converſation on indifferent ſubjects, "I learn that your mind is confuſed with doubts. Conſult your heart, refrain from the unreſtrained workings of your own imagination—reflect on the wants—the weakneſſes of human nature—ſeek for ſtillneſs and retirement, and weigh the matter with ſolemn reverence, and I think you will then diſcover ſomething within you that will point out the want of religion—of a heavenly Comforter!—I think you will feel ſecret aſpirations that will direct you to him—if you do not, no harm has been done—reſt contented and quiet, act ſincerely—and if it were right that you ſhould have further

further aſſiſtance, I doubt not but it would have been vouchſafed to you.

" In the bloom of youth, in the fluſh of enjoyment, when all within and without miniſters to our happineſs, we ſtand little in need of theſe ſecret, theſe ſilent conſolations; I know it by experience; but there is a time which may come to all men, when they will ſeek for an anchor and not find it, if they have no hopes beyond the grave.—Did you ſee a beloved parent in the ſituation I now am in—were ſhe ſuſtained by her principles, by her hopes, in the midſt of pain and bodily torture, on the verge of the grave; could you, and ſtill be in an amiable, humble ſtate of mind, make light of the Comforter that thus annihilated the calamities of your beſt friend? aſk your heart if you could?"

This

This was ſaid in ſo gentle, ſo pleading a tone of voice, that the appeal was irreſiſtible.—Alleyne burſt into tears, and was ſilent.

Mrs. Alwynne then turned to me, and begged me to conclude our ſitting by reading one chapter in the Bible. This I readily complied with; her eyes were ſhut—and a ſolemn "huſh of ſoul," ſeemed to reign within her, till I had finiſhed;—ſhe then took our hands one by one, and after bidding us a maternal farewell, we quitted her apartment.—I deſcribe thus particularly the manners of this excellent woman, ſince I am convinced that the narrative will at leaſt intereſt, if not inſtruct you.

EDMUND OLIVER.

LETTER

LETTER LII.

EDMUND OLIVER

TO

CHARLES MAURICE.

DEAR MAURICE,

SOMETIMES when I am highly excited by ſurrounding objects, my exiſtence is bearable to me—at others, all is flatneſs—dreary flatneſs—a death-like void!—My ſleep is altogether gone from me;—if I ſhut my eyes her figure, in ſtrange indiſtinctneſs, comes before me and rends my heart:—in the midſt of ſociety, when I would adapt myſelf to others, my ſoul communes myſteriouſly with her,—and if for a brief while a ſentiment of religion—a purpoſe of benevolence

volence—ſnatch my attention, the moment I am alone and the feelings of the paſſing circumſtance have ſubſided—ſhe again abſorbs my ſpirit, makes my heart tremble, agitates every nerve, as if with corporeal reality.—I have touched—graſped—the object which ſhe has touched,—preſſed it to my lips—till my whole ſoul has centered itſelf there.—Sometimes, it is true, I am more tranquil—ſo ſtrange have been the mutations I have undergone, that the root of all my feelings is ſhaken—the neceſſary connection of any paſſion with my identity is at an end—I have been anatomized—my aſſociations have been diſſected one by one—and now my paroxyſms of mental delirium are leſs laſting than formerly—I even at times feel as if I were ſinking into quietneſs:—this good old

lady

lady has much intereſted me—her devotedneſs of heart has communicated to me the pure flame of religion—the gentle affection of my ſiſter ſteals upon, and wins me with a ſweet ſolace, and the ſociety of Miſs Alwynne I am by no means indifferent to;—her manner toward me is affectingly tender—there is nothing of impetuoſity or paſſion in it, but there is an intereſting enthuſiaſm and a mild expreſſion of attachment that makes me feel my regard for her *moſt* when ſhe is *not present*.—When ſhe is near me I am never highly excited, but in her abſence I am reſtleſs, and perceive a void!

God bleſs you!

EDMUND OLIVER.

LETTER

LETTER LIII.

EDMUND OLIVER

TO

CHARLES MAURICE.

DEAR CHARLES,

I HAVE been rouſed by a morning's call from Alleyne.—After we had converſed for a ſhort time on general topics, he mentioned the converſation which had paſſed here, between him and Mr. Groutage.—" I did not," cried he, " take up my general ſide of argument, but I have ſo decided an averſion to the ſordid ſpirit of that Clutterbuck and Groutage, and their notions are ſo palpably narrow and degrading, that I think I am ſafe in oppoſing them : however I rather acted in conformity to a feeling of repugnance

pugnance, than any ſettled principles on the ſubject.

"Your confeſſion mortifies me," I replied.

"But," continued he, "does it not ſeem to you that all things here are enveloped in a gloomy uncertainty.—Happineſs by no means ſeems attached to any ſet of principles, or any modes of conduct.—The beſt laid ſchemes, the moſt perſevering virtue, are frequently diſappointed,—while in circumſtances where we leaſt expected it, we ſnatch exquiſite delight.

It would ſeem therefore, that all general rules ſhould be ſet aſide—that all violent efforts and long calculations, with regard to the future, ſhould be diſcarded;

ded;—that we ſhould ſeize pleaſure as it paſſes by us, regardleſs of the means, ſo as it offend not the decorums of ſociety.—For my part, I am ſick of conjecture, and having long baniſhed all firſt principles, I adapt myſelf to every circumſtance that occurs."

"My friend," anſwered I, "in order to eſtimate the good or ill effects of an hypotheſis, we ſhould not take ourſelves into conſideration alone; but we ſhould remember our relation to general exiſtence.

"Suppoſe that all men were to think like you, woeld not the world be taking a moſt retrograde courſe?

"Imagine in the inſtance of any ſevere trial of virtue—I will ſtate one at

at which perhaps you may be ſtartled—taking for granted that whoſoever puts away his wife is guilty of adultery, let us picture a man of extraordinary intellect, of the acuteſt ſenſibilities, linked to a woman of the fouleſt diſpoſitions, and of a temper that is the torment of his life;—further conceive him as ſtrongly tempted to ſeparate himſelf from her:—he alleges that in his preſent ſituation his talents are frittered away by vexations, and all his moral uſefulneſs loſt. What think you would be my opinion in this caſe? Exactly this, that to part from the woman would be highly criminal: it would not only be feeling a weakneſs, but acting in conſequence of that feeling; ſuch conduct would pamper the ſubtleties of ſelf-adulation;—another man leſs tried would think his

caſe irremediable, and by degrees, were all poſitive rules abandoned, all firſt principles neglected (the ſacredneſs of marriage, in my opinion, is one of them, but the preſent argument applies equally to a hundred caſes), ſeeking for preſent remedies, for immediate happineſs, we ſhould loſe the firm graſp of intellectual volition, and ſink at laſt to the nothingneſs of brute exiſtence. This is the downward conſequence of allowing no firſt principles."—"But, Sir," replied Alleyne, "are there not many caſes in which it is impoſſible for us, by a ſtraight line of conduct, to overcome the moral difficulties that await us—is not flight ſometimes our only mode of eſcape?"—"It is our own weakneſs that makes it ſo," I continued—"we are always miſtaking the extent of our individual powers

powers—debilitated perhaps by palſying and accommodating opinions, for the greateſt poſſible attainment of human exiſtence;—there is a virtue which perhaps nothing can withſtand!—a virtue which ſweetens trials, and plants roſes amid the thorns of oppoſition; that loves (in the conſcioufneſs of conquering temptations) to feel its heaven-derived ſtrength—a countenance always beaming with benignity—a manner of unalterable ſweetneſs—a ſoul burning with ardour to do good—a heart yearning for the happineſs of fellow natures,—ſuch materials would regenerate any ſolitary human depravities by juxta-poſition.

"A man with theſe would harmonize the moſt foul diſpoſition in a female

companion. Human nature is too weak, the heart is too deſperately prone to wickedneſs to allow of the abſence of poſitive rules; and ſhould we, as you ſeem to approve, admit in theſe difficult caſes of flight, rather than enforce patient perſeverance; as I ſaid before, the ſtruggling deſire after excellence would be gone, and the Nazarene would have fooliſhly ſaid, "be ye perfect even as your Father in Heaven is perfect."

I continued.—"My belief of the extreme proneneſs of human nature to deceive itſelf, the proofs which exhibit themſelves every day "of the ſubtleties of ſelf-adulation," theſe conſiderations, Sir, convince me of the deſirableneſs of a revelation; of the inſtitution of certain poſitive and definite rules from which there is no appeal, thus diſci-

plining

plining human nature to a model external to itſelf, rather than ſuffering its own ſophiſticated and fitful impulſes to direct it.—Believing as I do that the general laws of Chriſtianity produce the greateſt poſſible happineſs—thinking thus, and deeming as I have ſaid before of the neceſſity of inflexible rules, theſe notions mutually coaleſce, and determine the concluſions of my mind.

"But, Sir," exclaimed Mr. Alleyne, "were a perſon to act ſimply from the belief of the moment, and ſtrain every nerve for the attainment of abſtract perfection, inattentive to the progreſs of thoſe around him, he would ceaſe to have fellowſhip with human beings—he would never come in contact with men as they are, for you well know that in order to operate effectually on minds

we ſhould not be above a ſhade better than thoſe around us."

"Taking for granted,"—I replied, "the belief of a Deity—and truſting that there are certain tendencies in the moral world, it ſhould ſeem that we cannot *prematurely* anticipate *ſimple perfection*, for even though we ſhould not be underſtood in the preſent day, we ſhould be examples to poſterity, ſhould be looked upon as beacons amid the intellectual night—I ſay again, that if we diſcover that any principle is of eternal and immutable application, ſuch as the principle of equality, whereby we deem it robbery to hold uſeleſs property in defiance of a poor and ſuffering neighbour, and neglect to act in conformity to it, we accuſe God of weakneſs, for we firſt admit that he has given evidence

of

of the profitable and good effect of ſuch a principle, and then pretend to doubt whether in his own good time he will bring it to light—for *ſuch hesitation* can alone juſtify any tardineſs in conforming to theſe inflexible rules of right. —There perhaps never was a man ſo far ſuperior to his contemporaries, that no one individual underſtood him, or was capable of receiving benefit from his example; for if ſuch a being were ſlighted by all his immediate connections, his fame would cheer the ſolitary one panting after virtue in ſome diſtant clime. And even were there a caſe ſo extreme as to render it apparently impoſſible that our rigid virtue ſhould be of this uſe, ſtill believing that in ninety-nine caſes it were right to act in conformity to firſt principles, we ſhould do it

in the hundredth from faith, and from a wiſh to preſerve the habit of mind."

Alleyne ſeemed ſtruck at my ideas, and ſaid, "that he would reflect again on the ſubject, fearing," as he expreſſed it, "that he had deſerted the cauſe too lightly."

Oh Charles! this converſation has done me much good—ſhall I give way who hold principles like theſe?

The martyr at the ſtake, the ſavage laughing amid the tortures of his enemy, ſufficiently prove that a certain energy of volition may annihilate mental weakneſs and bodily ſuffering—ſhall I then, who am bleſſed with all the comforts of life, baſely give way when one ſenſibility is not gratified?

No,

No, no!—the villainy, the injuſtice of the dereliction, while there are human beings to act upon, and I have powers to uſe, comes with new force before me.

Charles—it is to thee that I owe theſe ideas—Oh that they may ſilently work within me till they have leavened my infatuated mind to virtue, and ſevere benevolence.

EDMUND OLIVER.

[Between ſeven and eight months now elapſe, during which time Edmund and Ellen remain at Mrs. Alwynne's.]

LETTER LIV.

EDMUND OLIVER
TO
CHARLES MAURICE.

Pentonville, June ——

DEAR CHARLES,

MRS. ALWYNNE is taken ſuddenly worſe. Her diſeaſe has gradually encreaſed ever ſince I came here, but this morning ſhe was ſeized with a paralytic ſtroke, her ſpeech forſook her, her eyes wandered vacantly round the room, and her face on one ſide was much contracted.—The little family is thrown into the utmoſt conſternation. Several connections who on this occaſion aſſume the right of dictating, have taken poſſeſſion of the houſe.—Poor Edith is

quite

quite perplexed;—in conſequence of theſe circumſtances, Ellen and I have determined to ſet forwards this evening for your habitation—I have ſo often heard you ſpeak of the ſituation that we ſhall readily find you out.

I ſhall quit this place with a ſad deſolateneſs of heart.—I write this letter on a little deſk, which the good woman always called her own—in which ſhe ſtored her weekly market bills, and where many of her friends' letters, and of her own memorandums now lie. Oh my friend, thou canſt not conceive her ſolicitude to diffuſe good to all around her!—If at any time ſhe obſerved that our ſpirits were ruffled, or depreſſed, ſhe would the next day adapt her converſation in the moſt gentle manner to the

ſtate

ſtate of our feelings. She was always watching for opportunities of improving others in a way which ſhould ſeem the leaſt obvious to themſelves, and ſhe won your heart by her friendſhip, never attempted to govern it.

The other day, from an oppreſſion of ſpirits conſequent upon my paſt feelings, I was indulging in ſome general expreſſions of diſcontent; the following morning ſhe graſped my hand more tenderly than uſual; her countenance beamed with unutterable ſweetneſs, and ſhe gave me the following letter, which I ſhall tranſcribe, not as indicating originality, and profoundneſs of thought, but pious ſolicitude, and motherly affection.

"I feel

"I feel a desire to advise you, my dear Edmund, not to give way to a discontented temper, because it will bring a gloom over your mind, and very much tarnish your virtues.—Do not let small inconveniencies discompose you, but learn to bear them with patience—they are unavoidable in our passage through life, and yours are, comparitively, scarcely worth attention;—look at the lower ranks of people, who earn with difficulty a scanty meal with hard labour—they are cheerful, and perhaps thankful—and will you, in the enjoyment of plenty and many accommodations, give way to a restless and dissatisfied mind, because every little convenience is not as you would have it?—Indeed, my dear friend, this is a snare to your virtue, and if you yield to it, will lead you from peace and comfort;

fort; but I truſt you will endeavour to watch againſt it, and look up to Heaven with gratitude for your favourable allotment, and for the talents you are bleſſed with, which may enable you to be a uſeful member of ſociety, ſo as to fill up every duty in this life, and lead to never-ending felicity in the next.

"E. A."

Whenever ſhe ſpeaks of herſelf, and if at any time her diſeaſe is alluded to, "Though thus afflicted," ſhe will ſay, "I am not uncomfortable; in a long life changes are to be expected, and conſidered as proper."—Yet now, Charles all communication ſeems cut off for ever between her ſoul and ours—her face has ceaſed to expreſs the overflowings

ings of her benignant ſpirit—her eye, which ever beamed with affection, and almoſt healed the ſickly mourner, is ſet. I feel this ſeparation more than I ſhould have predicted; but feelings bind me to her, which may not be deſcribed.

When I came here firſt, I came with a debilitated ſpirit.—I ſhould have revolted from the parade of philoſophy—I was only to be won by thoſe conſolations which ſteal upon the feelings. Theſe ſhe has adminiſtered to me;—the attachment which I am conſcious of towards her, is of a holy and ſoul-ennobling kind, which I love to cheriſh, and dwell upon in my beſt moments:—Yes, meek and virtuous being, thou haſt ſoftened the ruggedneſs of my untamed will

will—thou haſt embodied my notions of perfection in thyſelf—thou haſt led by a gentle gradation, the fervors of my impetuous heart to a purer zeal for the "better cauſe;" thou haſt converted my paſſions and appetites to affections and aſpirations after purity, and thy idea ſhall ever be preſent when I dwell upon thoſe comforts which ſpring from a ſanctified heart.

I have been with her for the laſt time—her voice is nearly gone, and ſhe ſcarcely faltered out my name;—ſhe took my hand and laid it upon her boſom—her Bible was by her ſide—a tear ſtole in her eye as ſhe looked at me—preſently the book caught her attention—ſhe ſhook her head gently—and a faint ſmile, or rather an expreſſion of benignant

benignant quietneſs, came over her countenance—

I left the room, and her for ever!

EDMUND OLIVER.

LETTER

LETTER LV.

EDMUND OLIVER
TO
SYDNEY ALLEYNE, Esq.

Manchester.

DEAR ALLEYNE,

WE are ſo far on our way to Ambleſide.—I promiſed to write to you immediately, and having this evening no employment I ſhall devote an hour to you.

I left your neighbourhood with much regret—that good old lady was become very dear to me—Miſs Alwynne had won my ſincereſt affections—and the privation of your intercourſe I ſhall ſenſibly feel; but I am going to a moſt

dear

dear and valuable friend, and truſt that in his ſociety, and amid the wonderful ſcenes which ſurround his habitation, I ſhall entirely conquer the ſicklineſs of my paſſion-troubled mind.

You know my ſtory, Alleyne.—I told it you as we walked under that long avenue of elms, which runs parallel to Mrs. Alwynne's dwelling—the tale much affected you—I have not yet dared to make any enquiry after Gertrude.—Paſſion and ecſtaſy are not the elements for human beings—their long duration is incompatible with the conſtitution of our natures—nor ought we when we look around us, and ſee the miſery that falls to the lot of moſt individuals, to expect the felicity which they promiſe us—

No, we ſhould—bear right on!
Nor dream of happineſs, or of the glow
That fills the inebriate ſoul, and ſatisfies
Its infinite cravings: the ſweet conſciouſneſs
Of rectitude ſupporting, and the thought
That (in our time fulfilling, as we may,
The work aſſign'd by our great Maſter) we
With ſure feet haſten to Perfection's goal!

Yet I view my delirium with complacency as a means of forming my character. That good lady has converted many of my ſenſations to a higher aim —I have felt lately a quiet ſatisfaction in my ſoul, to which I was heretofore a ſtranger—indeed I am inclined to think that a paſſion of the moſt warm, viſionary, and enthuſiaſtic kind, if ever ſubdued, leaves the heart in a ſoftened ſtate, not unfavourable to the happieſt influence of true devotion!

Is

Is it to conſider too curiouſly, or in anywiſe profanely to conſider thus?—We know that an idol is *nothing*—ſtill, Alleyne, the tranſition is eaſier from the worſhip of Jupiter, or Baal, to the worſhip of the one true God Jehovah, than from abſolute Atheiſm.

A ſtate of romantic paſſion, and the habit of devotion, are ſimilar in kind, though different, let us hope, in degree; in both the heart is drawn from the groſſneſs and indiſcriminateneſs of worldly attachments—in both, the mind is led out of itſelf, and its own meaner intereſts, to the contemplation of a being whom it comes to love for itſelf alone—in both, the object is *One*, perceived by fancy rather than ſight—both are rallying centres for the combined energies of feeling, and imagination—both make the

mind

mind unſatisfied with aught beſides its Beloved—of courſe, the one is a natural path to the other, at leaſt I think I feel it ſo; the mind, forbidden to entertain hopes of the enjoyment of an object which has long been emphatically its all, cannot reſt in meaner attachment, finds nothing alluring in ſenſuality, or the purſuits of wealth or worldly honours;—it cannot "ſtoop from feeding on that fair mountain to batten on thoſe moors."—It becomes reſtleſs, diſſatisfied, and would abſolutely pine away, were not the whole force of its affections, all the powers of its fancy, and all the current of its hopes and fears, diverted into another channel; led to the contemplation of another object whom it ſhall love, admire, and adore with ſentiments differing in degree rather than in kind.

When

When I contemplate my own mind, I can perceive three diſtinct ſtages in its proceſs towards amelioration; I have plunged in all the depths of ſenſuality, I have rioted in all the wildneſs of youthful paſſion and imagination, and I have lately felt, I truſt, ſomething of that calm peace which hallows

"the long ſabbath of ſubdued deſires."

I thank Heaven for all the trials which I have undergone—leſs ſevere diſcipline would never have tamed my impetuous nature; and truſting that the reſt of my life may be paſt in treaſuring together and benefiting myſelf by the experiences of my early youth, I begin to feel a cheering hope, and a comfort whoſe quiet calmneſs evidences the poſſibility of its continuance.

EDMUND OLIVER.

LETTER

LETTER LVI.

ELLEN OLIVER

TO

EDITH ALWYNNE.

MY DEAR EDITH,

I HAVE much to tell you—much I fear that you will be little prepared to hear in your preſent diſquieting ſituation. We reached Mr. Maurice's laſt evening. You know that we had no time to receive an anſwer to our letter, informing him of our intended viſit.—Little did we conjecture the conſequence of ſo ſudden an arrival.—As I entered the ſmall dwelling, I perceived diſtinctly embarraſſment and confuſion on the faces of thoſe around us.—Maurice ſhook Edmund's

mund's hand with eagerneſs, but it was with an agitated expreſſion of affection; he turned pale—his wife was more evidently confounded—her eye caught her huſband's, and they both fixed the look of ſilent enquiry on each other.

Tea had been ordered—we were juſt drawing round the fire, when the door ſuddenly opened, and a female figure, in a night dreſs, with long black hair, diſhevelled, and looſe on her ſhoulders, burſt into the room—ſhe claſped an infant in her arms—her countenance was ghaſtly, but ſuffuſed at this moment with a hectic fluſh. "Oh where is he?" ſhe ſhrieked.—Mrs. Maurice ſeized the babe—I at that inſtant looked round, and ſaw my brother ſitting petrified in his chair—the unknown lady ſank on the

floor as one dying—Maurice ſeized her, and on endeavouring to lift her, the motion again rouſed her exhauſted frame. —Her eyes, which were before cloſed, opened, and fixed themſelves upon Edmund;—at this inſtant neither of them reſembled living beings—the lady ſtiffened with horror, and it was impoſſible to move her except by force—preſently her muſcles relaxed, and ſhe burſt forth in a moſt vehement delirious laugh—ſhe broke from Mr. Maurice, and ruſhed to Edmund with the deſperate look of an aſſaſſin;—at this inſtant two ſervants entered, and ſhe was dragged violently (at the ſame time ſcreaming in the moſt fearful manner) out of the room.

Mrs. Maurice had retired with the baby. No ſooner was the unknown lady carried

carried off, than Mrs. Maurice burſt with a frantic ſcream into the tea-parlour—"She is poiſoned!—ſhe is poiſoned!" My brother ſtill continued motionleſs, and without any appearance of life.

Mr. Maurice was on the point of ſpeaking to his wife, when Oliver's eyes ſuddenly uncloſed, and he exclaimed—"Gertrude!" The truth then ruſhed on my mind—it was really my unfortunate couſin—ſhe had come to Ambleſide with Mr. Maurice (who from the fear of wounding Edmund had never mentioned her name in his letters to him) as a place of refuge.

Here ſhe had been lately delivered of a ſon;—the vehemence of her feelings, and her various ſtruggles, had preyed upon her mind, and a violent fever en-

ſued, of which ſhe was confined when we arrived.

She had long meditated the deed; the conſtant preſence of ſome perſon had prevented her putting it into execution. In one of the intervals of her paroxyſms we entered the dwelling.—Mrs. Maurice had quitted her, and ſhe had at this moment diſcovered that the unfortunate Gertrude had availed herſelf of the opportunity to ſwallow a bottle of laudanum—immediately after ſhe had ruſhed thus wildly into the apartment—when we returned ſhe was already in ſtrong convulſions:—an apothecary was ſent for, but to no purpoſe—her fever had already nearly exhauſted her ſtrength, and in a few hours ſhe breathed her laſt.

Edmund

Edmund was in the room ſome minutes before ſhe expired;—no words can paint his looks—his deathlike looks!——He threw himſelf on the dead body—nor could we by any means remove him from the chamber the reſt of the night.

My poor couſin had been ſo much disfigured by her ſorrows, that I had not any recollection of her.—I can add no more;—theſe calamities have nearly overpowered me.—Pray write to your afflicted

ELLEN OLIVER.

LETTER LVII.

Mr. MAURICE
TO
Miss ALWYNNE.

DEAR MADAM,

I ADDRESS you by Miſs Oliver's deſire, who feels herſelf ſo much overcome by the wretchedneſs which ſurrounds her, that ſhe is completely incapacitated from writing.

The unfortunate woman, the horrible end of whoſe calamities Miſs Oliver informed you of, was buried yeſterday. Her family have none of them enquired after her ſince the error, which I truſt her accumulated ſorrows have more than expiated.

Mrs.

Mrs. Maurice and I attended the body to the grave—the humble grave of the once enthuſiaſtic Gertrude;—the afternoon was grey and ſilent—the ſound of the cataracts, which ſurround the village, was the only one which broke the profound repoſe—the trees murmured not—the diſtant hills were gloomily unchequered with light and ſhade. The funeral was ſimple, and a few ruſtics, beſides ourſelves, were the only attendants.—When the earth and ſtones rattled over that frame, which lately was agitated with hopes and fears ſo vehement, I felt a cold deathlike drearineſs creep over me.—When we returned, we found Edmund calm, as indeed he has uniformly been ſince the firſt night; but there is a ſad deſolateneſs, and ſtiff, unnatural inſenſibility, in his looks; he props his feet

on the fender, ſupports his head between his hand, and thus ſits with his face covered for hours together.

May I dare to enquire after Mrs. Alwynne.—We are very anxious to hear from you.

Your's moſt ſincerely,

CHARLES MAURICE.

* LETTER LVIII.

EDITH ALWYNNE
TO
ELLEN OLIVER.

MY DEAR ELLEN,

THIS ſeparation will be too much for me! I have juſt quitted my mother's apartment; ſhe had been removed from her bed to an armed chair—ſhe was enveloped in a large ſatin morning gown, which had been my father's—her eyes were turned towards the green fields, which lie behind our dwelling, where we have ſo often walked and enjoyed ourſelves together;—her ſpeech was gone—but her ſenſibilities, her ideas

* This letter was written before the two laſt came to hand.

ſeem more vigorous than ever. The ſun ſhone brightly, and illumined a clump of firs which waved gently in the golden light; –here there was a ſeat placed, to which in the evenings I uſed to lead her, and read ſome favourite author.—She pointed to the trees—then took my hand and kiſſed it;—her manner, Ellen, is inexpreſſibly touching!—ſhe beckoned me to ſit down. I cannot deſcribe to you the agony with which I contemplated the feeblenefs of her motions and the contractions of her countenance, which has ſo long been familiar to my heart.—To hear a broken accent, an inarticulate, and faltering attempt at expreſſion, from her to whom I have liſtened in almoſt all my *happy hours*, is too ſevere, too hard a change for me to be capable of reconciling myſelf to it!

I look

I look at her, and expect the wonted manifeſtations of her regard; but inſtead of theſe I perceive a fruitleſs ſtruggle for utterance:—her eyes, her manner, indicate the overflowings of an unabated affection, yet no one dear accent bleſſes me.

After we had thus ſat for ſome time, ſhe gently lifted the ſkirt of the gown which enveloped her, and looked at me. In my laſt ſickneſs, Ellen, I had been wrapped by her hands in that gown—ſhe remembered it, and a tear ſuffuſed her eye—ſhe recollected, that her daughter would now have no kind friend to watch by her bedſide;—this overpowered me—my emotions burſt forth, and I ran into an adjoining cloſet to give vent to them. When I returned to her chamber, ſhe perceived that I had been weeping bitterly.

terly, and ſhe beckoned to me to retire, which I did. I left the ſervant with her, and am employing myſelf in writing to you; it diſburthens, in ſome meaſure, my oppreſſed heart.

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

The phyſician has juſt been with me; he ſeems to conſider the continuance of my mother as miraculous, and attributes it to her complete ſerenity, and compoſure of mind. She has not been able to ſwallow any food for many days—a little liquid, with which we wet her lips, is her only means of ſupport.

Dr. G—— ſays that he conſiders her life now as a complete exemplification of the opinion, that clearneſs of mind, and calmneſs of feelings, may indefinitely prolong,

prolong, even where it ſhould ſeem impoſſible, animal exiſtence.

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

She has ſent for me, and by means of ſigns has given me direction in all the houſhold affairs. This morning her hair was adjuſted with as much niceneſs as ever, and her cap changed as if ſhe had been in the higheſt health. Her powers are completely her own—life has been with her ſo much a preparation for death, that now the time is approaching, ſhe ſeems to have nothing to do.

Never have I heard one ejaculation, one death-bed reflection, ſince ſhe has been confined, which ſhe now has been wholly for three months, yet methinks, her lips often move with a ſuppreſſed prayer.

prayer, and her looks beam with pious gratitude.

Let me hear from you ſoon.—I feel very deſolate ſince your departure.—It is true, I am little alone, for my uncle and aunt are continually coming backwards and forwards.

God bleſs you!

EDITH ALWYNNE.

LETTER

LETTER LIX.

SYDNEY ALLEYNE, Esq.
TO
ELLEN OLIVER.

DEAR MADAM,

MISS Alwynne ſent for me early this morning. I haſtened to the habitation, and found that her mother was on the point of breathing her laſt.—An awful ſtillneſs dwelt in the houſe—I was admitted to the chamber;—the ſervant, and nurſe, with their faces drowned in tears, and conſcious that their offices were now at an end, ſtood at a remote part of the room—Miſs Alwynne, in ſilent agony, pale, and breathleſs, graſped the bed-poſt, and fixed her countenance on her dying parent.

A faint

A faint heaving of the breaſt was the only remaining ſymptom of life—her eye was cloſed eternally—and her face ſunk, and fixed, was never more to modulate itſelf to the pure affections of her ſpirit. Theſe languid reſpirations continued, now accelerated, now for a time ſuſpended till my very ſoul forſook me, and dwelt as it were in theſe forlorn indications of life;—at laſt the body was motionleſs—the ſheet lay unlifted on her boſom—Edith ſhrieked aloud—the ſoul of her mother was gone for ever!

I have juſt left the apartment.—Miſs Alwynne has been prevailed upon to quit it; and I have haſtened to inform you of the ſolemn, though long expected event.

I am, dear Madam,

Your's,

SYDNEY ALLEYNE.

LETTER

LETTER LX.

EDITH ALWYNNE
TO
ELLEN OLIVER.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE ſeen her for the laſt time!—As I entered her apartment, and ſaw through the half-drawn curtains the landſcape without ſmiling as formerly, it ſeemed as if I had awoke from a dream; other objects appeared gay—the room was juſt as ever it was—and why ſhould not ſhe be ſo? I went up to her chair, and felt as though I ſhould find her ſitting in it.—My eye caught the bed as I paſſed, and my parent, the friend of my infancy—the kind partner in, and conſoler of all my ſorrows, lay dumb and motionleſs

motionleſs in a coffin!—in her grave-cloaths! Were I to live an eternity, I ſhould not forget that moment;—a gleam of watery ſunſhine ſtreamed on her face—the undulating light gave an appearance of animation to it, and every moment I expected to ſee her ſmile; but I will dwell no longer on this—my emotions are not to be endured—and when I remember, Ellen, what you are ſuffering * * * * * * * * * * *

Mr. ALLEYNE *in continuation.*

Miſs Alwynne is too ill to finiſh her letter; ſhe has juſt informed me that I ſhould find this incomplete epiſtle in her writing-deſk, and has begged me to fill it for her.

The

The funeral of Mrs. Alwynne will be to-morrow; after the ceremony, her daughter will be removed to her uncle's, which I fear is a very unfit reſidence for her in her preſent ſtate of mind.

I have heard with much ſorrow of the calamitous events which have taken place ſince your departure.

This is a time of trouble; which way ſoever I turn, tidings of diſtreſs afflict me.

Your's moſt ſincerely,

SYDNEY ALLEYNE.

LETTER

LETTER LXI.

CHARLES MAURICE

TO

SYDNEY ALLEYNE, Esq.

DEAR SIR,

I ADDRESS you at the requeſt of Miſs Oliver, who is aware of the anxiety you muſt feel, as the friend of Edmund.

This laſt ſhock ſeems to have petrified him—he ſpeaks not—complains not!—but from morning till night he is as one inanimate. The exceſs of his ſenſibilities, and the fervor of his attachment to Gertrude, have made him for many years the very ſlave of paſſion, and impetuous impulſe; yet I ſtill have hopes that his mind, after the ſevere diſcipline it has gone through,

through, will again recover its health, and regain the juſt equipoiſe of its long diſorganized powers.

Ellen Oliver informs me that Edmund had confided to you his tale. Poor Gertrude! how untimely, how calamitous has been her fate!—With her mind what capabilities had ſhe of diffuſing happineſs wherever ſhe went.—Alas! Sir, theſe powers were all blaſted by the unbridled impetuoſity of her will.—Paſſion in her ſuperſeded affection; and a general, and indefinite ardour, the patient performance of individual acts of benevolence.

She never recovered from that ſevere fever; her frame was declining, and her pregnancy increaſed its debility—the birth of her child was too much for the irritable ſtate ſhe was then in.—You know

know the reſt, Sir.—Oh that ſuch an event as this could be a warning to other females to go perſeveringly onward in the ſtraight path of unyielding purity, and virtue!—In the conflict of the paſſions nothing is diſtinctly perceived;—the confines of good and evil become floating, and at laſt undiſcernible, till the miſerable being thus deprived of mental viſion, ſinks irrecoverably in an unfathomed gulph.

I ſtill truſt that our friend may be brought back to uſefulneſs, and rational virtue; experience is neceſſary for all minds, but for thoſe of wild and luxuriant growth like his, no diſcipline that does not utterly blaſt, and annihilate, can be too ſevere;—it converts the paſſions, to energies of patience, and fortitude; and raiſes

raiſes ſelfiſh ſenſibilities (from the hard-bought conſciouſneſs of what human nature ſuffers when oppreſſed by calamity) to general benevolence.

I am, Sir, your's,

CHARLES MAURICE.

LETTER

LETTER LXII.

EDITH ALWYNNE
TO
ELLEN OLIVER.

MY DEAR ELLEN,

THE ſevere trial is paſt.—She is gone, gone for ever. I have not only loſt a parent—I have loſt the cheriſher of my infancy—the kind ſharer in all my joys and griefs—a monitreſs on all difficult occaſions, and a friend, ever ready to feel and communicate.

I am now with my uncle and aunt, a reſidence as you may conceive by no means pleaſing to me.

The laſt duties of affection were performed the day before yeſterday. I know not

not what paſſed around me from ſun-riſe till late at night, when I was re-minded of its being time for repoſe; I then recollect ſcreaming my mother's name, and taking a taper in my hand, ruſhing into her chamber. It was a wet night—the windows were open, and all without was dark—the wind ſobbed amid the fir-trees which you know ſo well—the cheerful aſpect of the chamber was changed into ſilence and deſolation—the bed was ſtripped of its furniture—the chair on which ſhe uſed to ſit was vacant except that her morning gown lay over one of its elbows.

I then thought that the bitter elements were now raging on the grave of that beloved form, who but a week before was warmly and comfortably ſcreened in this very room!—I threw myſelf on the

floor, and remember nothing of the night except that it was paſt in wild agitation and ſtrange incoherency.

Yeſterday morning found me much exhauſted, but calm. Knowing that I ſhould be ſummoned during ſome time of the day to my uncle's, I reſolved to ſpend the few remaining hours in bidding farewell to all thoſe familiar and dear objects which I peculiarly connected with the idea of my loſt parent. As I went from room to room, a ſtrange dread and heavineſs weighed down my ſpirit. I ſeemed guided on by an "inevitable preſence," yet every inſtant I was obliged to ſtruggle againſt a ſenſation that made me pauſe, and thrilled me as though ſhe were near me. Every ſurrounding object, and each apartment ſeemed filled with her influence;

fluence; and I heard, as it were, her meek voice whiſpering faintly in the air.

After I had diſburthened my heart by performing this laſt office, I went again to the chamber of my mother, and kneeling by the bed-ſide, prayed that the good ſpirit which had protected her through life might reſt upon her orphan child.

My affections which had ſo lately been broken, mingled with my devotion;—the ſpirit of my parent was preſent in my prayers—I felt as if her ſoul and mine held communion; my tears flowed freely, and I aroſe from the place in a more compoſed frame of mind than I had hitherto experienced.

In duties like theſe the day paſſed; towards evening my aunt called in her chariot to conduct me to her houſe.

It was with difficulty that I ſupported myſelf during the laſt moments of ſeparation from the beloved dwelling; however the uncongenial diſpoſitions of my aunt ſubdued me, and kept my mind in a ſtate of fear leſt I ſhould attract her notice, that in ſome meaſure counteracted my tenderer feelings.

I have heard, Ellen, of the lamentable fate of Lady Gertrude:—Poor Edmund, my heart bleeds for him!—Oh Ellen, you know not what I have felt on this ſubject!—do write again ſoon, it will comfort your afflicted

EDITH ALWYNNE.

LETTER

LETTER LXIII.

EDITH ALWYNNE
TO
ELLEN OLIVER.

MY DEAR ELLEN,

WRITING to you is a great relief to me. The coarſe and authoritative manners of my uncle and aunt depreſs, and the trifling flippancy and unmeaning loquaciouſneſs of my couſins weary me. I fly from theſe beings with delight to the ſociety of my Ellen. My time paſſes either in ſolitary walks, in reflecting in my room, or is loſt amid the vexatious buſtle of the family circle. My bible is the only book which I look into, and I love to dwell on thoſe paſſages which peculiarly adminiſtered comfort to my

mother.—How beautiful are the laws of the univerſe!—Thus it is, my Ellen, that every pain is but a mean to a greater good, than, had not that pain been permitted, could poſſibly have been produced.—My afflictions give a peculiar ſuſceptibility to my heart.—I read theſe holy pages with new emotion; and thus, by an eaſy transfer, connect ſenſations which were formerly entirely engroſſed by an earthly object, with the more important ſubject of religion. How deſirable is it that all affections may be ſo trained, as to become miniſters to virtue and piety!

The friend whom I have loſt, moſt aſſiduouſly called forth my moral feelings, my benevolent affections; but as carefully repreſſed the daintineſs of ſentiment,

or the falſe refinement of paſſion and romance.

A ſolitary life, and a life which has cheriſhed meek and quiet ſenſibilities, rather than violent impulſes, has, I think, produced in me that ſilence and ſedateneſs of character, which in general is ſcarcely to be attained without the diſcipline of ſevere misfortune. A ſpectacle of poverty, or the mournings of a deſerted widow, will rend my heart; but I turn with loathing from the whinings of a fancy crazed lover, or the ſofter lamentations of a languiſhing girl. Thoſe events which may be deemed poſitive ills in any ſtage of life, or under any circumſtances, I never contemplate without much ſorrow; yet never ſhall I tutor myſelf to pity keenly thoſe whoſe ſufferings derive their poignancy from the impe-

tuouſneſs of an overweening imagination.

My grief at the loſs which has lately befallen me would have been tranſient, had it owed its birth to the blind ſympathies of nature, or to the uncalculating attachments of domeſtic habit :—Yes, in ſuch circumſtances it would have been as a paſſing cloud; but as it is, I mourn a *confeſſor* when I was guilty of error, a *participator* in my feelings when I ſuffered, a *parent* when I looked for home and its endearing pleaſures, and a *friend* when my heart and mind wanted a ſecond ſelf.—Oh, my Ellen! ſhe ſupplied all the cravings of my nature—ſhe came in contact with every impulſe of my ſoul; but though ſuch be my loſs, I will not repine; ſhe has ſuffered, and is at reſt. I will ſpiritualize my affections for her;

they

they ſhall become the handmaids of my devotional aſpirations—ſhe ſhall be the beacon which ſhall remove the undiſtinguiſhable nakedneſs from the world of ſpirits.

EDITH ALWYNNE.

LETTER LXIV.

ROGER OLIVER

TO

EDMUND OLIVER.

Glasgow, August ——

DEAR BROTHER,

THAT woman who met you in the Borough, Margaret M'Brair, called upon me in London, and informed me of the ſecret of our couſins' treachery.

I immediately wrote to them, ſtating to them the evidences for their perfidy; theſe were ſo irreſiſtible that they voluntarily offered to ſhare their property with *me*.

By

By another letter I gave them to understand this would not do, and directly set off for Scotland. After some fruitless attempts to work upon my feelings they have yielded, and I am now come into the quiet possession of my father's wealth. I wish you to come here immediately in order to the final settlement of this business. The money is of little value to me, but I rejoice in the downfal of these infernal villains.

Your's,

R. OLIVER.

LETTER LXV.

CHARLES MAURICE
TO
SYDNEY ALLEYNE, Esq.

DEAR SIR,

TWO months have now elapſed ſince the death of Lady Gertrude, and till yeſterday an uniform expreſſion of deſpair has occupied the countenance of Oliver.

When I wrote you laſt, and indeed for many weeks ſubſequent to that letter, a horrible vacancy of manner, and an unnatural and reſolved wretchedneſs of look alarmed us.

One morning as I came down ſtairs, I heard a groan that ſeemed to rend the boſom

boſom it came from.—I entered the breakfaſt parlour, and found Oliver proſtrate on the very ſpot where Gertrude had fallen—he clung to the floor—he ſaw me not as I approached him—his countenance was deathlike and pale. In a few ſeconds I ventured in an affectionate, though rather upbraiding tone of voice, to call out "Oliver, Oliver!"—He ſtarted up ſuddenly, and for the reſt of the day was tolerably calm.

Rebecca was much embarraſſed for ſome time leſt Gertrude's infant ſhould come in his way. This entire concealment of the child was managed for ſome time; but one evening its cries caught his ears—it ſeemed as though the recollection of Gertrude's baby at that moment flaſhed acroſs his mind;—he ruſhed out of the room, ſprung up ſtairs, and before

we

we could overtake him, guided by the ſcreams of the child, had thrown himſelf at its feet.—There he lay gaſping, and almoſt convulſed with agony when I entered; preſently the ſobs of the little creature ceaſed, and a dawning ſmile came over its face; this gave a tenderer turn to Oliver's feelings, and he burſt into a flood of tears; and from that time the infant Gertrude has been his conſtant companion.

This circumſtance, together with the unceaſing attentions of his ſiſter, who always placed herſelf near him, ſolicited his looks, took hold of his hand, and by every ſilent and gentle expreſſion endeavoured to win his heart from miſery, contributed to ſoften his feelings, and to introduce a tenderer ſhade of ſuffering. Ellen's affliction at the death of Mrs. Alwynne,

Alwynne, and the ſhock ſhe ſuſtained from Gertrude's unfortunate end, rendered her ſoul ſcarcely more undiſturbed than his; but her grief was leſs reſolute, leſs fixed, and leſs harſh—her's was ſorrow, not deſpair; ſo that the near approximation of her ſtate of mind to his, rendered her manner more intereſting to him, and gave her a power over his feelings which ſhe would not otherwiſe have poſſeſſed.

Yeſterday was, however, the firſt time that his ſoul yielded perceptibly to the influence of ſurrounding objects. I propoſed an excurſion on the neighbouring lake;—the day was ſplendid, the rocks, the mountains, the woods, and the paſtures, were all touched with the glowing radiance—Oliver's ſoul melted at the beauty around him, and a faint ſmile trembled

trembled on his countenance. The liquid ſound of the water againſt the ſide of the boat, the rich reflection of the variegated banks in the lake, and above all, the wonderful effect which the general ſcene around him produced, won his mind irreſiſtibly to a ſoft dawning of pleaſure.

Evening arrived, and we were ſtill in the boat; the red light gathered in the horizon—the water ſlept in the glowing refulgence. To the ſouth the hills ſunk away in a vaſt ſweep of ſoftened landſcape, the lake extended till it almoſt met the ſky—bounded on each ſide by meadows and tufted ſlopes of the moſt luxuriant verdure, here and there broken by a jetting rock, or a white village church; and terminated by a faint line of land, which almoſt melted in the purple

ple air. To the North the rocks, cluſtered, and heaped confuſedly together, formed an aſſemblage of the moſt fantaſtic and ſublime ſhapes.

Now they were loſt in ſhade, now a forked and angular peak caught the Weſtern gleam, and lifted itſelf unpropped in the ſummer ſky. Over theſe aroſe mountain above mountain, till the outline of the moſt remote faded like a cloud.

Some of theſe were wholly purple and bare; ſome cultivated at their baſe; and others ſeemed eternally moving from the undulation of hanging foreſts, while down the rocks huge cataracts, whoſe motion was become inviſible, and whoſe ſound was loſt in diſtance, lay like a white ſtreak from their ſummits to their baſe—

other

other waterfalls fell amid the woods which bordered the lake, and murmured diſtinctly as they held their unſeen courſe. Such an aſſemblage of objects could not fail to excite the benumbed enthuſiaſm of Edmund—his eyes indicated feelings to which his wearied ſoul had long been a ſtranger.

The evening was cool; we had lighted a fire in the parlour.—Ellen Oliver and I were ſtanding on the hearth, when he took me in one hand and his ſiſter in the other, and graſping us tenderly, betrayed a kindlineſs of ſentiment, and an affectionate cheerfulneſs, which we had never before noticed.

Oliver has received a letter from his brother Roger, informing him of a detection of villainy in the poſſeſſors of his father's

father's fortune, by means of which he had recovered his right; in conſequence of this change it is become neceſſary for Edmund to viſit Glaſgow, a circumſtance which by no means diſpleaſes me, as any thing which, by tending to ſhake his mind, will introduce new impreſſions, is favourable to its recovery.

Rebecca begs her kind wiſhes to the friend of Edmund, and both herſelf and I intreat you to aſſure Miſs Alwynne of our ſympathy and intereſt in her ſufferings.

I am, &c.

CHARLES MAURICE.

LETTER

LETTER LXVI.

EDMUND OLIVER
TO
CHARLES MAURICE.

Moffat, Sept. ——

DEAR MAURICE,

AND am I again ſeparated from my friend? Oh, Charles! when I was near thee, ſo entirely was my ſoul abſorbed by its ſufferings, I knew not that thou waſt neceſſary to me.—I perceived not the aſſiſtance which I derived from thy preſence.—I deemed that all earthly objects were indifferent to me: but this ſeparation has already rouſed my feelings, and taught me that my heart yet owns powerful ties in exiſtence.

The

The firſt ſight of my native country much affected me.—With what different views of things and hopes of the future did I leave it, to thoſe which now occupy my ſoul!—I was then lifted by the impetuoſity of paſſion; I ſtruck out of exiſtence all that had not ecſtaſy and agonizing bliſs in its eſſence and nature.—Life was to me a mere catalogue of delirious day-dreams, and ſtrange ſelf-created tranſports.—Common ſouls—plodding Grovelers—every-day forms—an inſipid, ſpiritleſs dragging on of this mortal burthen—my ſoul ſpurned at it—loathed it even to bitterneſs!—But now I am changed!—I have drank of the intoxicating draught, even to the dregs—I have taken of the poiſonous weed and preſſed its juices till my former ſelf has been laid in the grave.—And now a calm retreat, a little reſpite from theſe turnings and over-

overturnings of paſſion are all that I ſeek for.—I have ſcattered my feelings over the unintelligent void of exiſtence—for their object is gone for ever!—and even while it was, it lived not for me!

There is ſomething peculiarly intereſting to me in the character of Scotland. There is a wild unboundedneſs in its views—its broad and deſolate hills, its inſulated clumps of firs, with a white cottage here and there peeping from beneath them—even the hollow moanings of the reſtleſs elements, the frequency of its rains, the clouds that travel on its mountains, and the winds that whiſtle on their ſides, convey a ſenſation of indeſcribable pleaſure to my ſoul. My imagination is powerfully affected by its ſcenes, and I never feel ſuch unlimited,

ſuch

ſuch vaſt and ſtrange delight, as when I contemplate them.

You ſhall hear from me again when I reach Glaſgow.

My love to Ellen and Rebecca.

EDMUND OLIVER.

LETTER

LETTER LXVII.

EDITH ALWYNNE

TO

ELLEN OLIVER.

Sept. ——

MY DEAR COUSIN,

I HAVE a circumſtance to communicate which rather embarraſſes me.—Mr. Alleyne has made a ſecond declaration of his paſſion.

He called upon me yeſterday afternoon. My uncle, aunt, and couſins were abſent for the day. After an hour ſpent in indifferent converſation, he propoſed a walk.—I enquired of him whether it would be diſagreeable to ramble towards the fields which ſurround our old dwelling;

ling; he immediately expreſſed his approbation, and we ſet forwards together. We proceeded near a mile in ſilence.—Alleyne was evidently much embarraſſed; he ſtopped ſeveral times as if loſt in a profound reverie, and then turned his face towards me with an expreſſion of unuſual concern and ſolicitude; at laſt we croſſed the woody lane, which leads to our old houſe.—I approached the garden-rails;—you remember a large walnut tree that ſtood on the graſs plot before the door, and the vines which crept up to the roof—the preſent taſteleſs and unfeeling owner has cut down the walnut tree, and is tearing up the vines.

I ſhuddered at the ſight of this alteration, and turned away ſickening with the agony of mortified feelings. As we

croſſed the fields which lie towards the Severn, my vexation gave way to ſofter ſenſations, and my tears fell abundantly.

This called forth the ſenſibilities of Alleyne. "Ah, Edith," ſaid he, "that I had the power of wiping away thoſe tears—of quelling this regret which weighs upon your heart."

"That is impoſſible:" I cried, "if there were not inſurmountable obſtacles, I too could heartily join in the wiſh."

"Edith," and he pauſed and took my hand as he began to ſpeak, "you know that I am wealthy—that my wealth is of no importance to me, diſſimilar I as am to the reſt of mankind, if I can prevail on *no one* to ſhare it with me.—You ſtand in need of a protector, your unworthy relations

relations harraſs and weary you.—Oh that you would honour me with your confidence—that you would permit me to buy that dwelling (pointing to our old houſe), then you might be at peace and indulge the emotions of your affectionate heart!"—

Here he pauſed.—I was ſilent:—his earneſt manner and tones of affectionate entreaty had overcome me—I could only anſwer by my tears.

"I had aſpired," he added "to your affections, to ſome intereſt in your boſom—Oh, Edith, is all hope fled?—but this," he cried, after ſome heſitation, "is not my preſent object—think of me as your friend and brother—think of me as a being to whom all the purpoſes of exiſtence are loſt, not having the power of

contributing to your happineſs—do, my friend, my Edith, do bleſs me by conſenting to my wiſhes."

I ſtill remained incapable of making a reply.—" May I conſtrue your ſilence into conſent," he exclaimed, " Oh that thought tranſports me—it is heaven—it is bliſs unutterable!"—I was much agitated. Then with more calmneſs he continued, " Never more, Miſs Alwynne, if this mode of addreſſing you be diſagreeable, will I treſpaſs on your goodneſs.—I will ſtruggle only for your friendſhip, in the name of that friendſhip, and of that alone, permit me to replace you in your former ſituation—permit me to diſentangle you from the tyranny of your connections—permit me to be your confidant, your adviſer, your ———"

" Oh

"Oh, Alleyne," I cried, "oppreſs me not with your offers—I ſink beneath a debt of gratitude, which I feel I never can repay.

"To-morrow—wait till to-morrow—and you ſhall hear from me on this ſubject."

From this moment his manner changed, and became tenderly, though reſpectfully calm.

You know, Ellen, that my heart is not ſufficiently ſurrendered to Alleyne for me to feel comfortable in the idea of a connection with him; he was the companion of my youth—he was a brother to me; and I have ſo long looked upon him in this relation—ſo long lived in habits of intimacy and familiarity with

him, without ever admitting even the poſſibility of a nearer union, that I ſhall find the transfer of my affections from friendſhip to love impracticable.

His father died lately, a man whoſe property only was equal to his pride.—The relative circumſtances of our families have hitherto raiſed inſurmountable obſtacles to ſuch a connection, ſo that my mind is at it were mechanized to its preſent feelings.

Edmund you ſay is gone to Scotland; may Heaven protect him wherever he be, and may he finally meet with happineſs equal to his deſerts!

Commend me to Mr. and Mrs. Maurice.

Your's ever,

EDITH ALWYNNE.

LETTER

LETTER LXVIII.

EDITH ALWYNNE

TO

SYDNEY ALLEYNE, Esq.

BELIEVE me, my friend, I am undertaking a taſk which it will not be very eaſy for me to perform; it is the taſk of diſcloſing to you the inmoſt feelings of my heart; of opening to you the darkeſt receſſes of my character.

As the companion of my childhood, as the approved friend of my riper years, you are entitled to my confidence; the feelings with which you now contemplate me, the exceſs of ſenſibility which you have manifeſted towards me, make a de-

velopement of my inmoſt thoughts, which before, and on all occaſions, would have been no reproachable action, at preſent a neceſſary and indiſpenſable duty.

You formerly, Alleyne, loved me as the friend of your youth; you now, I fear, ſuffer me to be the miſtreſs of your heart.—Before I make any reply to what the *manner*, rather than the *matter* of yeſterday evening's converſation conveyed to me—let me aſk you whether you could bear to receive only the worn-out feelings of a diſappointed mind? I am going, Alleyne, to make a confeſſion to you (for I deem it my duty not to affect to miſunderſtand your conduct, not to keep back my moſt concealed inclinations),—I love another—I love your friend—I love Edmund Oliver.—This diſcloſure has never before been drawn

from

from me.—While Ellen was my companion, a probability ſtill exiſted that Lady Gertrude and he might be eventually united.—Beſides, I never would ſubmit to the meanneſs of betraying a predilection in a way that in all probability would bring the tidings of it *indirectly to its object*.—No, had I deemed it right to reveal it at all, I immediately would have addreſſed Edmund himſelf; but I much doubt, in any caſe, of the *propriety of a female being the firſt agent in theſe affairs.*

Secluded as I had been from the world —tamed as my feelings were, from a monotonous and quiet life, the moment I diſcovered a ſameneſs of character, a certain ſubduedneſs of ſoul in Oliver, (a diſpoſition brought about indeed by very different means, yet verging to the

ſame point with my own) I conceived a ſympathy towards him, which a longer acquaintance only tended to ſtrengthen.

"That ſad wiſdom which folly leaves behind,"

has an irreſiſtible charm for me; that repreſſed manner, that look, and thoſe geſtures that announce the ſettled workings of a tried and perſecuted ſpirit, affect me with an unſpeakable influence—pardon me—pardon me, Alleyne, but my affections are not my own!

I am reſolved never to make this ſentiment either known to Edmund, or his ſiſter; nor ſhould I have diſcloſed it now, had I not wiſhed by laying my feelings before you, to reſtore peace to your boſom;—you are worthy of a woman who can give you the firſt fruits of her affection.—I

love

love you, but I am not what is vulgarly called *in love*:—my heart, my ſoul, is not ſurrendered to you, does not proſtrate itſelf before you, ſoliciting you to diſpoſe of its future deſtiny.—I attribute not to you the myſterious importance—the ſtrange potency to bleſs, with which I would inveſt the man of my choice:—Perhaps, Alleyne, it may be well never to have theſe feelings gratified, ſince the growth of higher energies of our natures may be incompatible with their indulgence; but ſurely, my friend, delicacy and duty forbid a connection with a ſecondary object of the heart.—If by repeated ſtruggles (for I aſſure you I wreſtle day and night with theſe rebellious feelings) I may be permitted to conquer the weakneſs, glad, very glad ſhould I be to paſs the remainder of my life in the ſociety of a being whom I eſteem

eſteem ſo perfectly as yourſelf; and I could even *now* perhaps be happy in devoting myſelf to you, but a certain miſgiving of my ſoul, a low whiſper of my more ſecret and undiſcoverable ſenſations, tell me that I ought not to bring *a divided tribute to the arms of a husband.*

Thinking thus, and feeling a certainty that theſe objections will continue to oppoſe our union, I requeſt you to baniſh the wiſh from your ſoul.—Think of me as your friend, your ſiſter, but do not at preſent, if you ſincerely love me, talk of a nearer connection.

In order, Alleyne, that I may not loſe you as a *friend*, while I repreſs you as a *lover*, I have thus unboſomed myſelf to you. I am ſure you will not miſconſtrue

ſtrue the ſincerity and unfeigned good will towards you, which prompted me to this mode of conduct.

With regard to your propoſal of ſettling me in our old dwelling, it is quite out of the queſtion.—Both you and I would hereby incur the cenſure of all who know us; and as the good opinion of mankind implies a power veſted in us to work upon and influence their minds, we ought not lightly to throw it away. it would for ever prevent a connection on your part with any other woman, and *my* character, at leaſt, would be irretrievably gone.—And permit me, Alleyne, to ſuggeſt that with the loſs of reputation, ſometimes *one*, and *that no feeble incentive to virtue, passes away.*—I however allow, that it ought not to be

be ſo:—nevertheleſs, on the preſent occaſion, give me leave decidedly and earneſtly to intreat you to withdraw your purpoſe.

EDITH ALWYNNE.

LETTER

LETTER LXIX.

EDITH ALWYNNE

TO

ELLEN OLIVER.

MY DEAR ELLEN,

WHERE is he gone? my friend, my friend,—I am very wretched! Alleyne has diſappeared. I ſent a letter to him the day before yeſterday, in conſequence of our converſation.—This morning, as I was ſitting at the breakfaſt-table, my aunt informed me with a ſarcaſtic ſneer that my beau was off.—"Off," I cried, in great agitation, "what do you mean?—"You may fret and fume, niece," replied my aunt, "but it will be all for nothing I aſſure you.—Mr. Alleyne was ſeen to paſs through the city early yeſterday

yeſterday morning in a poſt-chaiſe, with a large travelling trunk faſtened behind; he is far enough out of your reach by this time, take my word for't."

My confuſion was very viſible, and my aunt ſhowered down reproaches and bitter expreſſions of contempt moſt unſparingly.—"What do you too expect a huſband, while my girls here (pointing to her daughters, whoſe countenances relaxed with a ſmile of malicious exultation) remain ſingle—you—a poor orphan——Don't you know, girl, that your couſins have fifteen thouſand a piece.—You ſhould learn to know who you are, and ought to be thankful to God for the *purtection* of your kinsfolk. Why you have not a ſix-pence in the world."

I retired

I retired immediately after this addreſs, to which, from the frequent repetition of ſimilar ones, I was almoſt callous, and had the mortification to learn on further enquiry, that Alleyne had really left the country, for ſo I may conſtrue it, ſince one of his ſervants has told my aunt's maid that he is gone "a many hundred miles."

This circumſtance wounds me deeply. He is a moſt amiable young man; his ſenſibilities are exceſſive.—I would not for worlds be the cauſe of ſuffering to him.

EDITH ALWYNNE.

LETTER

LETTER LXX.

EDMUND OLIVER
TO
CHARLES MAURICE.

DEAR CHARLES,

MY brother is reinſtated in our old dwelling; he intends giving up the buſineſs.—The ſhare of property which is likely to fall to Ellen and myſelf will be about ten thouſand pounds.—With this I ſhall retire, and eſtabliſh myſelf in your neighbourhood.—I ſend you no detail of this affair, as it is irkſome to me to dwell upon it; nor could the narrative give you any pleaſure.

Had not this independence in the courſe of things fallen to my lot, I ſhould have

have availed myſelf of your offer.—I certainly never would have been the prime agent in diſpoſſeſſing theſe men. As it is done, and finding that by means of advantageous marriages they are both well provided for, I accept, though with ſome reluctance, a portion of that wealth which would be uſeleſs to my brother, and who, in caſe of my refuſal, would keep it for Ellen and himſelf.

My couſins are about to embark for America; their character is ſo completely ruined here, that they can no longer make this place their ſcene of action;—and there is certainly among the Scotch, a generous indignity at deeds of injuſtice, which would render the country no eligible abode for a detected villain.

I ſcarcely

I ſcarcely know how to reſiſt the hoſpitality of this neighbourhood; having been ſo long in England, the frankneſs, the generous conviviality that ſurrounds me, ſtrikes me with all the novelty of foreign manners.—As a political body, the Scotch are leſs independant than the Engliſh:—they are generally poor, and ſeek in profeſſions or ſinecure places, to ſatisfy their wants without wounding their pride. A perſon in Scotland, with five hundred a year, will live in a ſtyle equal to a man of eight hundred, or a thouſand in England. Domeſtic plenty, and an unconcerned habit of expence, in the internal œconomy of an eſtabliſhment, are here perpetually ſacrificed for an equipage, a numerous train of ſervants, or the means of giving a ſplendid entertainment. The Scotch ſpend rather as a con-

a conceſſion to the opinion of others, than with a view to their own comfort. In families where there are laced liveries, and all the paraphernalia of rank, you will find penurioufneſs and mean evaſions of expence in matters that attract not public attention—nevertheleſs, with all theſe foibles, as individuais, and as men, they are frank and hoſpitable, poſſeſs a nice ſenſe of honour, and a warmth of conſtitutional ſpirit unknown to the natives of the ſouthern parts of this iſland.

Upon the whole, my heart leans towards Scotland, my head beſt approves of England; having been ſo many years in the latter country, I truſt that I judge with impartiality of both.

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

I had

I had written ſo far, ſeveral days ago—ſince that time I have been quite ſolitary, and have employed myſelf in wandering over the ſcenes of my childhood.—One ſpot I have avoided viſiting, or even naming—I have felt the pain of ſad recollections, till the propenſity which led me to cheriſh them is entirely gone.

That ſevere illneſs which I had in London, and the phyſical hardſhips I went through in the Borough and in Shoreditch, certainly formed an epoch in my character.—I look now with a calm contemplativeneſs, ſomewhat ſad, 'tis true, but not unpleaſing, on circumſtances which two years ago would have phrenſied me.—It is only now when I am alone, and in a peculiar mood, or when I am ſomewhat excited by an object

that

that may have addreſſed my ſleeping paſſions, that I feel poignantly my paſt calamities.—A devotional habit has taken poſſeſſion of my ſoul; I ſit for whole hours breathing forth half-formed and inarticulate prayers to the Deity.—I have a ſtrange pleaſure in deriving my all of comfort from internal reſources, and of experiencing, in the deſolation of mortal hopes, my confidence in Heaven to be unſhaken.

For ſo tried am I,
That if a kindly ſmile ne'er met my gaze,
That if an accent of ſubduing love
Did never more pierce my unwonted ear,
I think *I could* go onward, undiſmay'd
And uncomplaining!—I would wrap myſelf
In holieſt quiet, I would brood on years
That have been happy—I would ſtrive to think
That the ſincere paſs on not unbeheld
Of him who knows the heart, and I would ſhape
A happier future, a redeemed race,

The

The retributions of a better world—
Yea, all theſe thoughts ſhould miniſter to me
'Till I were *rich in friends!*—

I ſhall be detained here ſome months longer—when our affairs are ſettled I ſhall ſeek for a habitation near your's, to which I truſt Ellen will accompany me: from the cultivation of ſome forty or fifty acres—from the purſuits of literature—from the affectionate intercourſe of my ſiſter—from your's and Rebecca's friendſhip; and from the calm conſciouſneſs of doing all the good I am able in a quiet, and confined ſphere, I ſhall derive every pleaſure of which my nature is now capable.

E. OLIVER.

LETTER

LETTER LXXI.

CHARLES MAURICE
TO
EDMUND OLIVER.

DEAR EDMUND,

YOUR ſiſter, and a friend who is with us, Rebecca, and I, have been rambling among the ſublime, and pictureſque ſcenes in this diſtrict.

Laſt week we aſcended the hills which ſurround the ſmall lake of Brotherwater, examined its ſecluded, and almoſt unknown beauties, and from thence approached Ulſwater, on the ſide of Patterdale. After we had refreſhed ourſelves at the ſmall inn at this end of the lake,

we ſtill proceeded by its margin till we came to the foot of that immenſe mountain Helvellyn :—this we purpoſed aſcending.—Having engaged a guide at the little ale-houſe at the bottom of the hill, we addreſſed ourſelves to the enterprize. For a conſiderable time our road lay among broken fragments of rock which had fallen from the cliffs above us;—among theſe, the hoarſe, and clear mountain torrents were perpetually daſhing;—behind us lay the green and woody fields which in many places border this moſt intereſting of the Engliſh lakes;—before us, rock piled upon rock, ſummit upon ſummit, aroſe, till the more remote acclivities were loſt in the clouds, which, as the day was variable, glided now on the tops, and now ſwept down the ſides, of the mountains.

Beneath

Beneath theſe, lay ſmall glens, and angular receſſes terminated frequently by a green field, a ſolitary hay-ſtack, or a ſhepherd's cabin, and ſometimes fringed with tufted underwood.

Our path was rough and broken;—now interrupted by vaſt maſſes of rock which muſt have fallen with a thundering echo from the Alpine heights above, and now impeded by an impetuous ſtream, which daſhed furiouſly along the ſavage deſcent.

Having gained ſummit after ſummit, ſtill imagining our toil nearly at an end, and ſtill beholding as we proceeded higher reaches than thoſe we had yet climbed riſing beyond us, we were ſurprized at the diſcovery of a lake of no inconſiderable magnitude at the height

of many hundred yards from the baſe of theſe congregated mountains—the water lay in black and gloomy quietneſs in the ſhade of clouds which reſted on the cliffs beyond us—nothing was to be ſeen around the margin of this ſolitary water, except rifted fragments of ſtone, a ſwampy turf of the darkeſt green, and indiſtinct outlines of forked and fantaſtic peaks, or deſart and heathy mountains.

The acceſs to this lake was cloſed to the eye, and no chearful opening to the ſcene below reminded us of the exiſtence of a world beyond the ſkirts of the naked precipices which hung over, and ſeemed as if threatening to fall upon us.

We left this ſcene, and at a little diſtance, found another lake of ſimilar character. We had now quitted the

inn

inn four hours, and were yet at ſome diſtance from the top of the mountain:—thither, however, we arrived after conſiderable fatigue, and the wonderful grandeur and magnificence of the view would well have recompenſed a toil infinitely more difficult.

Juſt as we reached the ſummit, the wind roſe, the hill was clad in a miſty cloud, and the rain here congealed to ſleet, beat in our faces:—the air was intenſely cold, and had we not uſed the precaution of furniſhing ourſelves with ſpirits, which were carried by our guides, we could not have endured the ſudden change of temperature.

Preſently the clouds diſperſed, and the ſcene before us, glittered with the

dewy ſunſhine.—Hill after hill, rock ſuſpended upon rock, and lakes quietly enboſomed in the intermediate vales, lay in the inſtantaneous gleam.—Here, a cluſter of mountains caught the ſide-long light;—there other mountains, gloomy in ſhade, ſcarcely appeared through the ſlant rain, while the glittering drops caſt an unreal ſemblance of fairy enchantment on the heights which were intercepted by the departing ſtorm.

We reſted ourſelves againſt a pile of grey ſtones, which marked the higheſt part of the hill.—The wind whiſtled round us—the ſcene below, from the clouds which paſſed at our feet, ſeemed continually in motion—the watery ſunſhine was ever dancing from rock to rock, and from mountain to mountain, and altogether

gether the immenſity of the view, the gorgeouſneſs of its objects, and the perpetual changes of the elements, which gave an appearance of life and motion to the whole ſtretch of landſcape, produced an effect on the imagination, unſpeakably impreſſive and ſublime.

We deſcended the mountain with more difficulty than we had aſcended it:—the ſides in many places were ſo ſteep that it ſeemed as though, ſhould our feet ſlip for a moment, we muſt fall headlong to an immeaſurable diſtance. However, we regained the little cottage at the ſide of the lake in ſafety, and returned in the evening to the inn, at Patterdale.

I have filled up a vacant hour, in deſcribing this excurſion; and conſcious

as I have been that theſe lines would have your peruſal, I have filled it up not unamuſed, and of courſe not without profit: for innocent pleaſure, Oliver, may always be deemed an acquiſition.

CHARLES MAURICE.

LETTER

LETTER LXXII.

CHARLES MAURICE
TO
EDMUND OLIVER.

October.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I AM about to mention a circumſtance to you, which has ſprung out of our tour;—a circumſtance of the moſt unforeſeen nature, and which threatens to deſtroy your plan of domeſtication with Ellen.

On the ſouthern, and leſs frequented ſide of Ullſwater, about the middle of the lake, lies a ſmall opening among the mountains, called Martindale.—During our excurſion to this part of the country,

we croſſed the river, by means of which this connects itſelf with the ſmaller lake of Brotherwater, and aſcending the mountains on the Weſtmoreland ſide, traverſed their unfrequented and pathleſs tops for ſome miles, till we deſcended into this little, and almoſt inacceſſib'e vale.—At the foot of the hills lies a ſmall village, whoſe ſimple church is ſcarcely diſtinguiſhed from the grey ſtone houſes which ſurround it. A clear ſtream interſects the green meadows, which ſtretch up the acclivities on every ſide of this village.—We were much intereſted with the ſolitude and privacy of this retreat: here we determined to paſs ſome hours, and conſigning our horſes to the care of a boy, whom we met in the village, we agreed upon examining the ſolitary beauties around us. In climbing one of the fells, in order to command an opening to the

the lake, which lay at the diſtance of about half a mile from the village, we obſerved a man of thirty years of age, driving a mule in a ſmall cart, loaded with turf, from the mountain;—three roſy children, dreſt in ſhort frocks of brown holland, followed him:—his countenance bore an appearance of ſolemn ſadneſs, and though his cheek was ruddy, there was a languid dullneſs in his eye;—his coat and waiſtcoat were black, a pair of thickſet breeches, and coarſe worſted ſtockings, compleated his dreſs.—His hair was of the darkeſt brown, and fell gracefully on his ſhoulders, and his appearance altogether, though ruſtic and homely, indicated mental ſuperiority, and ſenſibility of heart.

We accoſted him, and ſoon diſcovered that he was the Clergyman of the village —his

—his living amounted but to thirty pounds a year—with this he maintained himſelf, and the three children we met " and very contentedly and comfortably we live," he exclaimed, " the only thing that gives me any pain is the ſight of diſtreſs in many of the little huts around me, without myſelf having the power to relieve it.—Having much leiſure time, I employ myſelf during the ſummer months in digging peat for fuel, which I lay in heaps at the door of thoſe who ſeem in the greateſt want.—This is all that I have it in my power to do, except ſharing the milk of my ſolitary cow with my poorer neighbours."

We were much affected by the ſimple account which our new acquaintance gave us of himſelf, and deſcending the hill

hill with him, and his three children, accompanied him to his little dwelling.

He ſhewed us into a ſmall, though neat parlour—ſome cold meat, a nice ſallad and ſome cheeſe, were laid on the table for his dinner—he preſſed us to partake with him, to which we readily conſented.—After our meal, we invited him to return to Patterdale, and ſpend the evening with us. Accordingly Ellen and Rebecca mounted their horſes again, while Mr. Baſil and I retraced the mountains on foot.

In ſhort, Oliver, as our knowledge of him encreaſed, we became more and more intereſted in the character of our companion, and we preſſed him to viſit us at Ambleſide. He is now with us—and has this morning been conſulting with

with me on the ſubject of making propoſals of marriage to Ellen.

He took me aſide with an embarraſſed and heſitating manner.—I gueſſed at the ſubject which oppreſſed him from having obſerved the peculiar expreſſions of his geſtures and countenance, when Ellen was preſent, and anticipated his confeſſion by aſking him, whether he was not anxious to make ſome enquiries relative to Miſs Oliver.

" Ah, Mr. Maurice," ſaid he, " you have diſcovered my ſecret!"

Then ſtopping ſhort, as if to recollect himſelf, he cried, " Will you have the goodneſs to liſten to my tale; I wiſh to acquaint you with what I have been, and what I am, before I pretend to aſk,

aſk, or can expect to receive, your countenance."

I begged of him to proceed.

"I am the natural ſon of Lord B—; my mother died ſoon after my birth, and till the age of fifteen I was brought up in an obſcure village in Devonſhire, ignorant of my parentage. I lodged with an old woman who had nurſed me from my childhood, and always finding my wants comfortably provided for, I never thought of enquiring for my unknown benefactor.—I led a happy and rambling life—acquired robuſtneſs of conſtitution, and that wild, and ſimple character, which a ſecluded, and country education alone can give.

"About this time, a gentleman whom I never remembered to have ſeen, and whom

whom I have ſince diſcovered to be my father, after ſome converſation with my old nurſe, ſent for me, and informed me that I was immediately to be removed to Weſtminſter School—thither I accordingly went.—When I had compleated as much of my education as is uſually performed there, I was again introduced to this ſtrange gentleman, who now acquainted me with the ſecret of my birth, and informed me that I muſt prepare in a few days to remove to Cambridge.

" Lord B——, though he had ſtrictly forbidden me to reveal my parentage, ſupplied me plentifully with money.—I had a ſtrong love of pleaſure, quick ſenſibilities, and in conſequence, though my heart was never depraved, did not wholly

wholly eſcape the contagious influence of an Engliſh Univerſity.

" In one of my rambles in the neighbourhood of Cambridge, I obſerved a young female of the moſt intereſting beauty ſtand at a cottage door.—I accoſted her with a reſpectful, though tender familiarity—we converſed for ſome time, and agreed to meet (imperceptibly led on to a mutual intereſt in each other) again the next day, at the ſame hour.

" Suſan's perſon was of Nature's faireſt mould.—Her mild blue eyes, her delicate ſmile, and her timid geſtures, announced a winning ſenſibility of ſoul. We ſaw each other time after time—at firſt my manners towards her were diſtant, and though ſometimes they betrayed my heart,

heart, they never alarmed her modeſty.—Thus imperceptibly, and without intending it myſelf, I gained this innocent girl's affection.

"She lived with an aged aunt, who was blind; their cottage was in the moſt retired ſituation, and placed as I was at Cambridge, without any object for my feelings, the temptations to Suſan's ſociety were irreſiſtible.

"One ſummer evening, after a day ſpent in an unlimited indulgence at the table, with ſenſes inflamed, and with a heart, which, though always warm and impetuous, was now beating with all the fervor of paſſion—I haſtened to this lovely girl—my aſcendancy over her was complete—I had wholly ſubdued her affections, and in a moment of tenderneſs we

ſacrificed

ſacrificed our mutual ſelf-eſteem for the careſſes of a lawleſs love.

" Suſan's pregnancy was the conſequence of our intercourſe—ſhe informed me of this with tears—and with a countenance whoſe pleadings were irreſiſtible. I had wholly engroſſed her heart, my deſertion would have been fatal to her—and her poor aunt had no other ſupport!—I baniſhed all conſiderations of ſelfiſh prudence, all the objections ariſing from her uncultivated mind, and married her.—I had juſt entered into orders, and was about to leave the Univerſity, when theſe circumſtances took place.—Lord B— was informed of my conduct, which was repreſented to him in the moſt obnoxious manner, by one of thoſe paraſites which great men have ever at their heels.—The conſequence was, I received

a ſevere

a ſevere letter from him, in which he diſclaimed me for ever—he is ſince dead, and from that time I have received no aſſiſtance from him.

"Having cultivated an intimacy with a young man, who was patronized by the Biſhop of * * * * I obtained, after going through many difficulties, and often wanting the means of ſubſiſtence, the ſmall living of Martindale—to this place Suſan, and her infant, her infirm aunt, and myſelf removed.

"Though I found in my wife, a being devoted to my perſon, my ſoul often felt a cruel void.—She had ſenſibilities, and tenderneſs, but was wholly without information, and deſtitute of the deſire of obtaining it.—Thus Mr. Maurice, finding that my character was not under-

ſtood

ſtood by her—that ſhe valued my affections, but cared little for my mind, I betook myſelf to ſolitary rambles—I ſought in Nature, and in frequent aſpirations to Nature's God, for thoſe majeſtic ſubjects of contemplation, for which I perceived my ſoul was fitted.—Our aunt died in a few months;—Suſan, who was again pregnant, myſelf, and the infant we brought from Cambridge, made up our family. My income was thirty pounds a year—diſciplined as I had been by many difficulties, and hardſhips, ere I had attained this ſituation, and having ſacrificed all enthuſiaſtic and ambitious earthly hopes, in my connection with Suſan, I ſoon familiarized myſelf to my allotment, and found in the ſublime ſcenes around me objects for thoſe affections and energies, which I now diſcovered muſt never look for the

bleſſing

bleſſing of ſocial enjoyment.—Matters went on thus for four years, at the end of which Suſan died; and I have now lived three years a melancholy anchorite in this inacceſſible vale.—The friend who aſſiſted me in procuring the ſituation is gone to the Eaſt Indies, and till you broke in upon my monotonous exiſtence, my days, ever ſince the death of Suſan, have been melted down almoſt to inſenſibility, ſave when my children called forth my languid feelings, or when my imperfect devotions enabled me to look up with confidence to the Father of all our mercies.

"Since I met with Miſs Oliver, I have been conſcious of a new exiſtence—hopes and fears for which the ſenſibilities of my ſoul were well calculated, but which have never been called forth, agitate me; for, alas!

alas! I have hitherto walked through the world a ſolitary and uncompanioned thing."

Here he pauſed—I ſtated to him, as accurately as I was able, the ſituation in which Miſs Oliver is, and informed him that I would write immediately to you. I have thus given the detail of Mr. Baſil's hiſtory, in order that you may form an eſtimate of his character.

He certainly poſſeſſes much ſimplicity, and an unuſual ſenſibility for a man of his age to the impreſſions of external things, which ariſes from the laſt ten years of his life having paſſed without the preſence of an object in any way proportionable to the extent of his powers. He has much benevolence, a habit of quiet devotion, a principle of religion, whence he de-

rives

rives much comfort, but which he ſeldom ſuffers to eſcape his lips; it is a familiar and kindly friend to his heart, but he never prophanes it by a love of diſputation, or dogmatical aſſertion.—In fact, I ſuſpect that he is too ſceptical on ſubjects of orthodoxy, and finds them involved in too much obſcurity, to wiſh to introduce them as matters of converſation, and *too sincere* a Chriſtian to ſeek perpetually to canvaſs his already eſtabliſhed faith.—He finds that he can do much good in his profeſſion; and alleges that while all the ramifications of conduct are ſo loſt to human diſcernment, that he thinks it beſt to abide by a calling which has hitherto ſupported his family, and to which now his mind is at it were mechanized.

In

In ſhort, Edmund, Mr. Baſil engages all my affections, and a large portion of my eſteem; the ſoft and gentle ſoul of Ellen ſeems quite abſorbed in his intereſting and original character.

CHARLES MAURICE.

LETTER LXXIII.

EDITH ALWYNNE
TO
ELLEN OLIVER.

October.

DEAR ELLEN,

STILL no tidings of Alleyne. I have paſſed a moſt miſerable week—the inſults of my uncle's family are inſupportable! —and you too, Ellen, ſeem to have forſaken your friend—you have not written to me for this fortnight paſt.

I can ſay no more.—I entreat you once more to ſend me a letter immediately, it will be ſome comfort to your

ſolitary and forlorn friend,

EDITH ALWYNNE.

LETTER

LETTER LXXIV.

EDITH ALWYNNE

TO

ELLEN OLIVER.

MY DEAR ELLEN,

ALLEYNE is returned from his myſterious expedition. He called on me yeſterday;—his manner of accoſting me was ſomewhat different to any thing I had before noticed in him; there was a quiet ſadneſs, yet at the ſame time a ſmile of ſelf-complacency on his countenance, and altogether a reſervedneſs and caution in his behaviour, to which I am not accuſtomed in him. He evidently avoided any mention of the ſubject of his journey.—I introduced it two or three times,

and as often, with ſome degree of embarraſſment, did he give a new turn to the converſation. As he retired, I heard a half-ſtifled ſigh eſcape him, and he darted a look towards me "ſomething like deſpair."

I am much intereſted, Ellen, by your account of Mr. Baſil. In conſequence of the fortune which is lately come to you, there will be enough for your ſupport, nor do I think you can diſpoſe of it better than in devoting it to the wants of ſo worthy a being. I approve not in general of ſecond marriages; but where the firſt, as in this caſe, was the conſequence of a youthful indiſcretion, and where it was impoſſible the man could feel that complete *oneness* of character with his wife, which I deem indiſpenſably neceſſary to happineſs in the marriage

ſtate;

ſtate; where theſe circumſtances, theſe imperfections exiſted in the previous connection, eſpecially as, notwithſtanding his feelings, you find that he moſt rigidly performed the duties of a huſband and father, I think nothing ſhould prevent you from completing the happineſs of ſo valuable an individual.

Write to me frequently, for ſolitary as I am I wiſh to loſe myſelf in the contemplation of others.

E. ALWYNNE.

LXXV.

EDMUMD OLIVER
TO
ELLEN OLIVER.

November.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I HAVE received your letter, and it gives a ſenſation of happineſs to which my heart was almoſt a ſtranger, to find that there is a probability of your being connected with a man of Mr. Baſil's *tried* virtue.—So far, Ellen, am I from deeming his former marriage an objection, that I conſider it a fortunate circumſtance. Where two perſons have met, of minds ſo completely congenial, that they have formed as it were but one *moral being*,—a ſecond union is always to be

be deprecated—*nor would a man of any sensibility, in such a case, seek for it*; but Mr. Baſil was carried away in his youth by thoſe ſympathies which lead us towards the other ſex—he committed himſelf by an act of indiſcretion, but his very follies have been the miniſters of his preſent virtues.

He has been intellectualized by diſappointment; the affection which he feels for you is of a nobler nature, inſomuch as the conſequences of his former failing have done away the weakneſſes of his character;—he pines for a rational companion—he ſeeks for the comforts of an equal intercourſe.—Be all, Ellen, to ſuch a man that you can be, and ſeek, by devoting your powers to his ſervice, to compenſate for the apparent injuſtice of his former allotment.

I learn by means of Maurice, that in conſequence of an exchange which Mr. Baſil has in contemplation to make with another Miniſter, he is likely to fix his dwelling in the neighbourhood of Ambleſide; at this alſo I rejoice, and I congratulate Ellen on her promiſed fate!—There is one thing, however, which you ought ſeriouſly to reflect upon ere you finally reſolve on this connection; it implies your immediate entrance on the ſacred character of mother.—If you judge rightly, and are anxious for the happineſs of your ſpecies, this circumſtance ought to give additional weight and intereſt to the claims of Mr. Baſil—it affords you an opportunity of more extenſive and immediate uſe than you otherwiſe could be of.

The

The principles to be obſerved with regard to children are few and ſimple.—He, or ſhe, who watches the formation of their minds ſhould poſſeſs unbending firmneſs, completely free from irritability or pettiſhneſs.—His rules ſhould be few, and inflexibly adminiſtered.—A child ſhould never gain any thing by paſſion or complaint, as this will make him either a cunning flatterer, or an overbearing tyrant.—He ſhould be taught early to ſubmit to phyſical neceſſities, yet theſe trials ſhould not be abruptly introduced; and above all, not brought forward by ſtarts, or as it were, for the mere puppetry of experiment.—He ſhould not be acquainted with the duties conſequent on our relations in artificial life, till he is well grounded in immutable moral truths; nor ſhould rules and reſtrictions be multiplied, leſt his con-

ſcience and ſincerity be debauched by the neceſſity he feels himſelf under to conceal defects which the propenſities of his nature irreſiſtably lead him to.—In fact, what you have to do is to do nothing.—Education is rather a negative than a poſitive proceſs; and the parent who at the age of twenty can preſent children with robuſt conſtitutions, ſound judgments, and ſimple untainted hearts, though of unformed taſtes, inelegant manners, and with minds little ſtored with the foppery of literature, may congratulate himſelf in the expectation of giving exiſtence to uſeful citizens and upright men.

I am ſure, Ellen, that you are ſuperior to the narrow prejudices of thoſe who would tell you that becauſe you are not the mother of Mr. Baſil's children, they have no right to expect from you

the

the cares of a parent.—Some will ſay, "Be kind, be affectionate to them, but you need not ſuffer yourſelf to be agitated with the ſolicitudes which you would feel for your own offspring." But, in anſwer to ſuch ſhallow and confined reaſoners, let me aſk from what ſource are the duties of a parent and the claims of a child to that parent derived?—Not ſurely from the exiſtence of a few particles of matter in the infant, which may be traced to the *human occasion* of his being—No, God forbid that ſuch a groveling fiction ſhould take poſſeſſion of our minds!—Rather let us acknowledge, in the preſent ſtate of ſociety, the neceſſity of dividing the human race into houſes and families, and that conſequently the care of unformed minds devolves upon the perſon whoſe juxta-poſition and matured judgment fit him for the employ-

ment.

ment.—The duty does not ſpring from the conſideration that the children are *our own*, but from a perception of the neceſſity of *human agents* having a reſpect to *individuals*, rather than to the *aggregate of exiſtence*.—This neceſſity is the ſource of thoſe rights which children bring with them into the world, and theſe rights poſſeſs as inflexible a prerogative in the caſe of a ſtep-mother, as in that of the real parent.

Addreſs yourſelf then, my Ellen, not only to make a man hitherto unbleſt, comfortable for life, but alſo proudly aſpire to be the tender nurſe, the watchful guardian, and the rational inſtructreſs of his children.

When the property which devolves to you and myſelf is divided, your ſhare will amount

amount to five thouſand pounds, a ſum which, with the ſmall income that Mr. Baſil already poſſeſſes, will well ſatisfy the wants of a rational family—I am ſure will more than ſatisfy you, except you ſhamefully deſert the principles you profeſs.

I have almoſt, Ellen, for a time forgotten my own feelings in the contemplation of my ſiſter's approaching fate. I ſhall make a point of leaving Scotland before your union with Mr. Baſil takes place.

Your affectionate brother,

EDMUND OLIVER.

LETTER LXXVI.

ELLEN BASIL
TO
EDITH ALWYNNE.

March.

DEAR EDITH,

I HAVE this day been two months the wife of Baſil. Could the aſſurance of a friend's felicity, my Edith, infuſe ſome portion of happineſs to your forlorn and ſolitary ſituation, it would give a completeneſs to my bliſs, which I hardly dare hope for.

Mr. Maurice, who is the father of all who know him, has aſſiſted my huſband in taking a ſmall farm. To this, and his profeſſional ſtudies, he devotes his mornings and afternoons; his children are never

never out of his ſight, except the youngeſt, which he has committed to my care. Little Sophia is four years old—ſhe has all the cherub graces of infancy; her plump, ruddy cheek, her ſparkling eye, her keen look, her frolic gambols; in ſhort, her endleſs gaiety, and the ſweet and cheerful tones of her innocent voice, amuſe my leiſure hours more than I can expreſs. You know not, Edith, the pleaſure, the rapture which there is, in contemplating the child of a man we love!—When my Henry is from home, the affectionate careſſes of this darling baby often fill my eyes with tears, and give an intereſt to my being which I never before was conſcious of.

Baſil ſuffers his children to do whatever they like; he never reſtrains them, but takes care that nothing ſhall be put

in

in their way which ſhould tempt them to miſchief—they are all artleſſneſs and innocence—the words right and wrong are almoſt unknown to them; the only thing about which he concerns himſelf is, never to gratify a peeviſh demand, or anſwer an unneceſſary craving.—They are early taught to ſubmit to all the neceſſities of their nature; for this purpoſe, and in order that they may learn the art of deriving amuſement from within themſelves, they were ſhut while infants, two hours every day in a room completely emptied of every thing which might injure or wound them; if they cried at, and lamented their confinement, no notice was taken. By this and ſimilar means they have learned to conſider all the purpoſes of their father as unalterable; they always ſubmit without murmuring, and have acquired a patience

and

and ſteadineſs of temper, which I never before ſaw at ſo early an age.

Baſil ſays he never yet has puniſhed one of them; if they are fretful, he ſeems not to notice them: thus finding that they gain nothing by ill-temper, and every thing by mildneſs and good humour, the latter qualities become rather a habit of their mind than the effect of any voluntary exertion. Indeed, my dear Edith, I can ſcarcely tell you how happy I am; all my deſires are gratified—all the feelings of my nature have their proper object.—I look up to Henry as to a ſuperior being, who from his painful experience, and who from having gained his preſent virtues rather from trial than precept, feels deeply thoſe benignant diſpoſitions which ever beam forth in his conduct.

As

As for myſelf, my amiable qualities are merely negative. I never have been vicious, becauſe I have no temptation to be ſo; it is true, I have always loved to contemplate the eminently good, and I feel at this moment proud of being the diſciple of a man, who has attained his preſent character in the ſchool of mortal weakneſs and mortal ſuffering.

Mr. Baſil, Maurice, Rebecca, my brother, and myſelf, have projected a ſchool for the poor children in this neighbourhood. It is open every day, and one of us attends to it alternately. The duties of this inſtitution, the care of Baſil's children, and the delicious office of preparing the ſimple meal againſt Henry's return from his fields, occupy moſt of my time.—The evening he conſtantly devotes to me.—We read a favourite author,

author, or converſe on ſome ſubject likely to expand my mind.—Baſil acts upon the principle of making me a ſharer in all his ideas and feelings, a counterpart to his exiſtence. My heart is full when I think upon what I poſſeſs, and I frequently retire to my chamber to weep tears of gratitude to that ſupreme Diſpoſer of all things who called me into being, and rendered that being ſo happy.

The only circumſtance which now gives me any concern, except, Edith, the recollection of your unquiet allotment, is the ſolitary and forlorn ſituation of Edmund. His mind is become more perfectly tranquil—his time paſſes in reading, or in contemplating the wonderful ſcenes around him; but he wants thoſe nearer objects of exiſtence, thoſe

objects

objects so peculiarly adapted to our nature, which marriage and the domestic relations present to the mind. He has gone through the severest and bitterest sufferings, and has yet overcome them all; and I trust will, in the end, become a settled and useful character—will enter into the sacred relation of husband, and become the father of children, to whom (more fortunate than himself) his experiences may serve as a substitute for fresh trial and disappointment.

Oh, my Edith, I sometimes form a wish, that I dare hardly express!—what a dream would be realized, could I see you, and Edmund, blessing, and blest by each other!

ELLEN BASIL.

LETTER

LETTER LXXVII.

EDMUND OLIVER
TO
EDITH ALWYNNE.

MY DEAR EDITH,

IN what language ſhall I addreſs you? Long deſerted as I have been by impetuous hopes, and ardent deſires, how may ſuch a melancholy outcaſt as I, preſume to invite the attentions of a heart unſpotted and unmortified as your's?—Edith, my feelings, my aching feelings; my vacant and unſatisfied heart; my mind whoſe powers recoil upon itſelf for want of a fit object on which to exert them—theſe all tell me that I ought to form a connection in life.

I have

I have looked around me.—I have ſought with an ungratified ſpirit, till your name flaſhed on my reſtleſs mind. To be ſincere, Edith, I offer you my heart—I offer you the whole of my preſent ſelf—the whole that paſſion, diſappointments, and ſevere calamity have not injured.—It is my better part, I truſt, which remains, and it would fly a willing ſacrifice to your affection, as a ſhelter from the vexations and ruffling buſineſs of a wearying world.

When I thus addreſs you, I do not pretend to act from the ſudden ſympathies of a romantic paſſion. You know the ſeries of my paſt feelings.—I could not deceive you were I even to aſſume the ardour of a *first love*.—No, Edith, I now want a companion for my ſolitary moments, a ſecond ſelf, when I would

ſeclude

ſeclude me from the reſt of mankind.—There are many hours upon which we cannot calculate, when the heart is much diſpoſed to feel, when its ſpontaneous and almoſt indeſcribable emotions aſk for a being to whom we may think aloud; yet on ſuch occaſions would the enchantment of the preſent time be broken, ſhould we, by an expreſs effort, ſeek even for the moſt intimate ſociety.

How frequently, in my preſent cheerleſs ſtate, have I returned from the intercourſe of my friends, from the contemplation of a beautiful ſcene, to my ſolitary apartment, with an aching heart. My ſenſations accumulate too quick for me to be happy without the conſtant preſence of one to whom I can diſburthen them. I have often wept; I have walked backwards and forwards in my room—

nay

nay I have even talked to myſelf in order to tame down thoſe craving emotions which pleaded for the bleſſing of an equal companion.

I am convinced that domeſtic relations are the neceſſary and indiſpenſable means of leading the ſoul to general benevolence.—I have long exiſted without theſe relations, becauſe my ſpirit has ever been agitated with fervors unnatural and almoſt fatal; but the ſabbath, the quiet ſabbath of a tranquil and ſubdued mind, is at length come, and I again recognize thoſe *human feelings* and *wishes*, though not in a tumultuous, yet in no feeble degree, which create to the ſolitary man the neceſſity of the endearing names of huſband and of father.

You

You, Edith, my principles, my feelings, and my habits lead me to addreſs.—When I think of marriage I contemplate a ſtate in which two perſons exert themſelves for the ſame end in a conſtant unanimity of action—it preſents the nobleſt of intellectual aims; it is a relation that affords an everlaſting opportunity, nay, even implies the conſtant duty of making another happy;—it is, perhaps, a neceſſary ſcale in the grand proceſs of intellectualization, and perfection.—It calls each ſoul out of itſelf—makes it neceſſarily extend its compaſs of hopes, and fears; creates the duties of a parent, and evermore preſents objects for the tendereſt feelings, and moſt intereſting ſympathies.

With theſe hopes in my boſom—theſe principles in my mind, it is that I pre-

ſume to ſolicit you as a companion for my future days.—My fortune will well ſatisfy the wants of both of us—we will eſtabliſh ourſelves in the neighbourhood of Maurice and Baſil, and I doubt not, ſhall form a little ſociety of love and virtue, which may ſeem to anticipate that better ſtate of things to which, I truſt, the troubles of the preſent time are but the dim, and immitigable precurſors.

EDMUND OLIVER.

LETTER

LETTER LXXVIII.

CHARLES MAURICE
TO
SYDNEY ALLEYNE, Esq.

May, ——

BELIEVE me, my friend, it gives me the ſincereſt pleaſure to hear that your mind has recovered its tranquility. —Virtue and benevolence, like your's, will at leaſt never paſs unrewarded with the ſweet peace of conſcious rectitude.— By means of the journey which you made laſt year into Cumberland,* with the

* This was at the time when Edith's mind was ſo much perplexed by Alleyne's abſence.—Edmund was not informed of the purpoſe of this journey during his reſidence in Scotland, as his friend did not then think his mind in a ſtate likely to derive the benefit intended by the generous conduct of Alleyne from the ſcheme.

the diſintereſted purpoſe of informing Edmund of Edith's attachment, you have rendered two human beings, whoſe feelings and powers of mind fit them for the greateſt uſefulneſs in ſociety, completely happy.

Indeed, my friend, I ſcarcely know how to expreſs to you the pleaſure I feel in contemplating the circle around me—Edmund and Edith, who have been now married ten weeks, ſeem poſſeſſed of every bleſſing which mortality can aſpire to.

Baſil, Edmund, and I, have taken lands which lie contiguous to each other—we have baniſhed the words *mine* and *thine*—and each aſſiſts the other in the cultivation of that ſpot of ground which ſeems to require the moſt immediate attention;

—our

—our tables are ſupplied by our common induſtry, our wives have entered completely into theſe views—and except at night when we retire to a private home ſcene, we have abandoned the appearance, and have loſt the ſenſations annexed to individual poſſeſſions.—We meet every evening at each other's houſe, and by means of reading or converſation endeavour to approximate to a common identity.—Rebecca, Edith, and Ellen, always join in theſe ſweet aſſociations of love, and not unfrequently thinking on the paſt, on the wonderful variety of eventful means which have brought us to this intereſting union, to this common end, feelings of devotion abſtract us from the preſent purſuit, and with tears of gratitude, and ſenſations that cannot be uttered, we offer the ſacrifice of happy hearts to the author of our beings.

Edmund and Edith ſuperintend the education of the infant Gertrude: but the name of the mother is always avoided, except when we would ſubdue the reſtleſſneſs of an untamed will——and if at any time, deſires incompatible with this mortal exiſtence agitate our boſoms, we retire from ſociety to muſe awhile on her memorable grave!

CHARLES MAURICE.

MVSEVM BRITAN NICVM

THE END.

ERRATA.

VOL. I. Page 68. Line 3. omit the word *paſſion*.
— 98. — 16. for *ſhe*, read *he*.
— 102. — 10. for *arms*, read *aims*.
— 118. — at the bottom, for *fare*, read *farewell*.
— 170. — 1. inſert *reaſon* between *to* and *from*.
— 183. — 16. for *even* read *ever*.
— 218. — laſt line, for *eſcending*, read *deſcending*.
— 223. — 18. for *it would*, read *if you would*.
VOL. II. — 87. — 5. for *rom*, read *from*.
— 94. — laſt but one, for *bound*, read *bounded*.
— 144. — 15. for *woeld*, read *would*.